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Fraternity and Federation

BISHOP E. E. HOSS

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From the author's son

to

Captain Vail, whose con-

METHODIST FRATERNITY AND FEDERATION.

Methodist Fraternity and Federation

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BEING SEVERAL ADDRESSES
AND OTHER PAPERS ON
THIS GENERAL
SUBJECT

By

BISHOP E. E. HOSS

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PREFACE.

It has long been an established belief with me that anybody who ventures to publish a new book should be haled into court and required to show cause. I cannot plead any very good reason for sending forth this little volume. A few intimate friends insisted that I should do it, and I have yielded to their wishes. The fact, moreover, that I have been honored by being made fraternal messenger from my Church to the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Canadian Methodist Church, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Great Britain may be some excuse for putting the addresses which I delivered before the representatives of those three bodies into a somewhat permanent form. I shall be glad if enough copies are sold to pay the printer.

E. E. Hoss.

Nashville, Tenn., February 20, 1913.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

GREETINGS TO OUR CANADIAN KINSFOLK..... 1

SALUTATIONS TO OUR TWIN SISTER OF THE NORTH..... 27

A MESSAGE TO THE MOTHER CHURCH OF METHODISM..... 65

THE RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER..... 93

THE NEW DEMANDS UPON METHODIST AUTHORSHIP..... 105

AT THE GATHERING OF THE TRIBES..... 115

SOME CONDITIONS OF ORGANIC UNION..... 121

I.

GREETINGS TO OUR CANADIAN KINSFOLK.

"Fellowship with all we hold, that hold it with the head."
(Charles Wesley.)

GREETINGS TO OUR CANADIAN KINSFOLK.

[Fraternal address delivered before the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada, September 14, 1894.]

Mr. President and Brethren of the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada: As my credentials indicate, I am deputed by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, through its College of Bishops, to bring you a message of brotherly love. To discharge this agreeable task is my only business here. You may take it for granted that I have not come either to participate in your debates or to thrust any impertinent advice upon you in regard to the conduct of your affairs. We Southern Methodists, having suffered not a little from the mistaken kindness of outside friends who thought themselves providentially called to shape our policies for us, have grown a trifle timid about offering to interfere with the concerns of other people. I may also add that we do not doubt your perfect competency to attend to your own business in your own way.

Allow me, then, first of all, in the name of the 1,400,000 Methodists whose obedient servant I am, to thank you most sincerely for the honor conferred upon us by the official visit of your distinguished representative, Rev. Dr. Alexander Sutherland, to the twelfth session of our General Conference, held in the city of Memphis, Tenn., during the month of May last past. It is strictly within the limits of the truth to say that he

came and saw and conquered. No man from any quarter has ever appeared among us and left a more pleasant impression behind him than Dr. Sutherland did. His stately address—a body of copious and orderly thought clothed in a garb of fitting words—will be talked about for a generation; and his clear, strong, and tender sermons—the pure gospel set to perfect music—will linger in our hearts like the memory of sweet bells heard in the distant and unclouded days of childhood.

In truth, Mr. President, you have never at any time sent us a fraternal delegate who by his attainments and his character would not have been a credit to any Church in Christendom. Under the existing circumstances I shall not be guilty of the grave impropriety of discussing the question of annexation. Still I beg your courteous permission to say that we are perfectly ready at any time to annex Drs. Sprague, Briggs, Stone, and Sutherland. If, moreover, you should feel that you cannot part company with these capable and honorable brethren without some sort of return, then be assured that we have at least a few able-bodied itinerants on our side of the line whom we should be glad to offer you in exchange, *quid pro quo*. It is a standing question with us, Mr. President, whether you grow much of this tall timber in your part of the world.

Your first messenger to us has lately gone hence to the high places of the universe. It is easy to think of him as at home in those lofty spheres. Let us pronounce his name gently. Blessings on the memory of Dr. George Douglas, who blended together the chivalry of a knight and the spirituality of a saint—Richard the

Lion-Hearted and Thomas à Kempis both in one—and whose eloquence was as brilliant as the sunsets of tropical climes or as the auroral lights that flame in your northern heavens! To have known one such man is to have learned how to think better of our humanity.

I speak with perfect sobriety, Mr. President, when I say that we are greatly delighted to hear of your continued and increasing prosperity. The history of Methodism in Canada stirs our hearts like the blast of a trumpet. A nobler race of ministers never lived than those who, through infinite toil and self-denial, laid in these vast spaces the foundations of your vigorous and growing Church. From all the indications, the inference is clear that they transmitted their intellectual and moral qualities to their successors of the present generation. There is no sign hereabout of a decrepit or a degenerate Methodism. From sea to sea, and from the Great Lakes northward to the uttermost line of human habitation, you are flying your flag and pushing your conquests. All this is good tidings to our ears. As our venerable and much-loved Bishop Keener said on a memorable occasion: "When victory is gained at one end of the line, it will be heard in shout and pæan at the other."

Let me congratulate you on the unity that prevails among you. Unlike the river of Eden, "which was parted thence and became into four heads," you rather resemble our Mississippi and our Ohio, which gather each into a resistless current all the affluents that rush down from the encompassing hills. Herein you are an edifying spectacle, if not "to the world and to angels and to men," at least to the rest of the Methodist

Churches. May your oneness of ecclesiastical organization be more and more the outward expression and visible token of the fact that you are "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"!

Let me congratulate you on your steady increase in membership. There are some people who have pondered the story of Gideon and the three hundred, and dwelt upon the idea that the Church is "a little flock," until they are loud in the assertion that numbers are a matter of no importance. Such a view does not at all harmonize with the Wesleyan interpretation of the gospel. The true position is that the world is our parish. "All" and "everyone" are great terms in that catholic theology which not only commends itself to the closet thinker, but bears the test and strain of actual preaching in the open daylight of the world.

The address of our bishops for 1894 correctly and tersely says:

> The numerical increase of the Church is a most interesting and momentous item. It measures more than any other figures can both the fruits of our labors and the forces now at command to carry forward the work. What can equal the interest and significance of numbers when they are the numbers of saved souls? The increase is God's blessing in response to the longings, prayers, and toils of his servants. Hunger for converts cannot be satisfied while any are out of Christ. If our accessions were the spoiling of other folds, there might be small cause for rejoicing; but we raise the shout of praise and triumph over those whom God has delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son.

Let me congratulate you on the rising tide of missionary enthusiasm which enables you to spend one

dollar per member every year for the spread of the gospel in destitute and heathen parts. The chief function of the Church is not to coddle itself, but to evangelize the world. Any ecclesiastical body that forgets this truth deserves to die and be buried without epitaph or tombstone in the nearest potter's field. The notion that we should simply be solicitous to hold our own and let the rest of our fellow men take care of themselves is the first article in the devil's creed. We discredit our Lord and dishonor our own professions by listening to it for a single moment.

Let me congratulate you on the stability of your educational institutions, and on the great army of your young men and women that are seeking the advantages of highest culture under Christian auspices; on the assured success of your Publishing House, which with each new quadrennium widens the scope of its influence and sends out an increasing volume of religious literature; on your more than two thousand faithful ministers who go everywhere preaching the Word; and, most of all, on the general fact that as a Church you still stand fast in the faith of the fathers, cherishing the firm conviction that you have in trust a *bona fide* offer of salvation for every man—a salvation suspended on the solitary condition of obedient faith in the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ, consciously realized as a transfiguring experience through the operation of the sanctifying and witnessing Spirit, and attesting itself as a divine reality before all men by an upright walk and a godly conversation.

Mr. President, you have learned from the lips of my esteemed brethren who have been here in advance of

me—Bishops McTyeire and Galloway, and Drs. Sargent, Kelley, and Sledd—that Methodism in the Southern States of the American Union is a very vigorous and aggressive type of Christianity. It has been so from the beginning. Whether this is to be explained as the result of a natural affinity between fervent doctrines and fervent temperaments, I shall not stop to consider. The *fact* is matter of record and beyond dispute.

Of course you are aware that the pleasant story about the historical priority of good Philip Embury and his John Street Chapel, although it was long regarded as of canonical authority, is only a piece of consecrated fiction. The real origin of American Methodism is to be looked for under the ministry of Robert Strawbridge, that fiery Irishman who began to hold forth the gospel to his neighbors in the State of Maryland as early as 1760. Not only is it true that Strawbridge was first in point of time, but it is also true that he was first in point of zeal, ability, and success. The Annual Conferences began in 1773. At the session of that year, held in Philadelphia, 1,160 members were reported, as follows: Virginia, 100; New Jersey, 200; Philadelphia, 180; New York, 180; Maryland, 500. Our Bishop McTyeire, who dearly loved a hard-headed and self-willed man—at a convenient distance from his own jurisdiction—makes this remark in his "History of Methodism": "Indeed, about half the business done at the Philadelphia Conference, besides stationing the ten preachers, was in restraining the two grand and impetuous men (Strawbridge and Williams) by whom more than half the work up to date had been performed." And he further adds: "If any notable preacher or lay-

man has developed in the first generation from what it has become popular to call 'the cradle of American Methodism,' history fails to record the name. But several preachers were raised up by Strawbridge in his travels in Baltimore and Harford Counties, and many laymen whose families have been identified with the whole subsequent progress of Methodism in their respective localities, if not in the nation generally."

It may surprise some of you to learn that in the fifteen Southern States there are to-day 3,000,000 Methodists—a larger number, that is to say, than are found in the thirty-three Northern and Western States and territories. These do not all belong to us. About 1,000,000 of them are colored Methodists, and perhaps 500,000 are connected with the Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant Churches.

Our own existence as a separate Church dates back to 1844-46. Of the causes which led to the disruption of the original Methodist Episcopal Church, it would not be seemly for me to speak here, though there is no part of the record which we are not willing, under proper circumstances, to blazon to the world. From my heart of hearts I thank God that the unchristian alienations growing out of the epochal disturbances of half a century ago are rapidly vanishing away. There is no reason under heaven why they should any longer continue to exist. The two Methodisms ought to have no rivalry except as to which shall display the greater zeal in extending the kingdom of Christ. Whoever contributes, either by word or by deed, to the revival of dead issues, or to the continued life of such evil passions as still maintain a lingering and forbidden existence, is

either blind or bad—and there are times when blindness is badness.

We began in 1846 with about 500,000 members. When the Civil War came, in 1861, we had increased to over 700,000, of whom 207,000 were persons of African descent—a larger body of converted heathen than could then be found in all the mission stations of the world. In many communities there was a great preponderance of colored over white members. For example, Trinity Church, Charleston, S. C., reported in 1863 only 385 white members and probationers against 700 colored; and Bethel Church, in the same city, reported 383 white members against 1,492 colored. These dusky sons of Africa were brought from darkness to light partly by the teaching and example of such Christian masters as Nathanael Gilbert of Antigua, two of whose servants were baptized by John Wesley at Wandsworth, England, in 1760, and who himself became a local preacher eleven years before the first missionaries were appointed to the island of his residence, and died leaving a well-organized society of two hundred members behind him—partly, I say, by such as he, and partly by the unselfish and persistent labors of the godly itinerants who went from year to year to the lowly cabins on the cotton and rice plantations with the message of life. During the fifteen years between 1845 and 1860 we spent $1,875,000 in the prosecution of this form of religious activity. In the States of South Carolina and Georgia alone we had at the latter date sixty picked and capable men—none other were deemed fit—whose sole occupation it was to minister to the religious wants of the colored people.

But the close of the war left us prostrate. No words of mine can describe the wide desolation that stretched from the Ohio to the Gulf, and from the Potomac to the Rio Grande. It was enough to take the heart out of any people, and it would have taken the heart out of us if we had not had a thousand years of English history in our blood. The Churches, of course, shared in the general depression. The first census after the cessation of avowed hostilities showed that we had lost more than forty per cent of our numerical strength; and this was not so bad as the social and religious demoralization that always follows in the wake of war. One hundred and thirty thousand of our colored members left us before a General Conference could be convened, many of them led away by delusive promises that have not yet been fulfilled. To save the rest, and not, as has been cruelly charged, to get rid of an unpleasant responsibility, we set them up into a separate Church; and though then in the depths of poverty, we gave them property to begin with worth more than $250,000.

It was confidently predicted in some quarters that we should never be able to resume business on our own account. Clearly the wish was father to the thought. Prophecy is safer after the event. In less than six months from the close of the war the word went down the line to close up the ranks, and it met with an instant response. In 1866 the General Conference came together at New Orleans. It was by all odds the most radical Methodist legislature that ever assembled in any land. Things with us were in so bad a condition that nothing could make them any worse. Hence the

willingness to try divers and sundry experiments, all, however, within the line of reason. The progress of a generation was accomplished inside of four weeks. The pastoral term was extended from two to four years; the hard and fast time limit for probation was abolished, but the probationary principle was retained. The class meeting test of membership was wiped out, yet class meetings were still recommended as an invaluable means of grace. Church Conferences and District Conferences were introduced. Four new bishops—William M. Wightman, David S. Doggett, Enoch M. Marvin, and Holland N. McTyeire, each one in every sense a full-grown man—were elected. More important, however, than all these things was the adoption of a plan of lay delegation, not a tentative makeshift, but the genuine article—equal representation in the General Conference and effective representation in the Annual Conferences and other administrative bodies of the Church.

From that date we have taken no backward step. Instead of 447,000 members, which we then enrolled, we had grown at the close of 1893 to 1,345,210, an increase during the preceding quadrennium of 178,060. As the present year has been notable for its conversions and accessions, the probabilities are that we now number quite 1,400,000, embraced in forty-eight Annual Conferences. Two of the strongest of these Conferences are the North and South Georgia, covering the State in which John Wesley labored during his stay in America, and having respectively 89,995 and 57,949 communicants. You will be glad to know that in that goodly commonwealth, the last of the thirteen original

colonies, it is considered perfectly "good form" to be a Methodist.

Our people belong to every class and rank in society. "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all." But the great majority of those who worship at our altars are plain folk who earn their daily bread by their daily toil. May it ever be so! If we should forget the rock whence we were hewn and the hole of the pit whence we were digged, God would have no further use for us. Our mission is to the masses. Methodism is preëminently the people's Church. All this may be said without in the least inveighing against honest wealth or encouraging that seductive nonsense which, mixing some very old truths with some very old errors, takes to itself the title of Christian Socialism and seeks to get a vehicle of utterance through the evangelical pulpits of to-day.

The South has few large cities. Besides Baltimore, St. Louis, Louisville, and New Orleans, all of which, except the last, are on the border, there are none that go beyond 100,000. In New Orleans it took a long, hard, and costly effort to get the substantial footing which we now occupy. It is not necessary to tell you what the difficulties are in establishing Methodism in a community that is dominated by French Catholicism, and that includes within its borders as cosmopolitan a population as can be found on the face of the earth. In St. Louis and Louisville we have lately taken on fresh life and are making most satisfactory progress. Baltimore is strongly occupied by our sister Church, though we have there a number of good congregations and nearly 3,000 members.

In almost all the Southern towns of from 10,000 inhabitants up we are well to the front. In such cities as Norfolk, Atlanta, and Nashville, that range from 50,000 to 80,000, you can scarcely throw a stone into any crowd without hitting a Methodist. We have seen no reason to suppose that our Church is less adapted to urban than to rural communities. Still the fact exists that the main body of our membership is found in the country circuits, a great many of which furnish the ideal conditions for pleasant and successful pastoral labor. There is no picture that is sweeter than that of a neat country church, embowered in a grove of oaks and maples, with a hundred horses hitched all around it, and a congregation of devout and earnest worshipers within. One thing in particular is true among us: our supply of ministers comes chiefly from the country. Towns and cities do not breed many great preachers.

We have 5,487 traveling and 6,515 local preachers; 13,363 Sunday schools, with 95,676 teachers and 765,286 scholars; 13,185 churches, worth $20,567,757; 3,163 parsonages, worth $3,675,306; 179 schools and colleges, with 897 teachers and 16,620 scholars; property valued at $4,485,042, and endowments aggregating $1,538,000. Last year we raised for missions, foreign and domestic, $388,566, besides the $71,199 contributed and expended under the management of the Woman's Missionary Society. We have prosperous missions in China, Japan, Mexico, Brazil, and the Indian Territory. The number of missionaries, male and female, exclusive of those in the Indian Territory, is 100, and the number of members about 8,000. The Indian Mission Conference has 102 traveling and 176 local preachers, and

10,037 white and 3,225 Indian members. Our Church Extension Society has an average annual income of $65,000 and a growing permanent loan fund of about $100,000. Our Publishing House is worth, including its plant and operating capital, not less than $650,000 and is without any incumbrance. Within the quadrennium just closed, it gave $70,000 of its profits to the superannuated preachers. The *Christian Advocate,* the general organ of the Church, has an average circulation of 27,000 copies. There are twelve or fifteen other Church papers, many of which are ably edited and carry subscription lists of from 5,000 to 20,000. The *Quarterly Review* is a scholarly and able periodical. Up to this date it has not quite paid its way, but it is expected that its revenues will hereafter equal its expenses. Of the various Sunday school periodicals, largely over a million copies are issued. The General Conference, just closed, provided a complete organization for the Epworth League, ordered the publication of the *Epworth Era,* and elected one of our most brilliant men Secretary and Editor.

It is a matter for which we feel profoundly grateful to Almighty God that a highly esteemed citizen of St. Louis, the late Mr. Robert A. Barnes, not himself a Methodist, but the son of a Methodist mother, made a bequest in his will, which was probated about two years ago, of $1,400,000 to be used in erecting and maintaining a great free hospital under the control of our Church. The conviction more and more spreads itself among us that in all matters of practical beneficence we must bestir ourselves beyond anything that we have yet done.

If you ask whether in achieving the results that I have thus sought to enumerate we have used any peculiar methods, I answer that we have not. We are simply Methodists, holding and preaching every Wesleyan doctrine from preventing grace to perfect love, and offering no apology to any man or body of men for the fact that we are in the world.

Our polity, it is true, differs somewhat from yours, and is neither the better nor the worse for that fact. We are Episcopal Methodists, and spell General Superintendent with a rather large B. It is not to be denied that our bishops have very great powers—powers that could not be safely trusted for a single day except to wise and godly men, nor without due restraints to any men. Though without voice or vote in making our laws, they are invested with a limited veto as regards constitutional questions. In addition to this, the decision of a bishop on a point of law raised in a case actually pending becomes, after it has been approved by the College of Bishops and duly published, an authoritative construction of law.

Theoretically, moreover, the appointments of all the preachers are in the hands of the bishops; but as a matter of fact, most of them are settled by the concurrent judgment of the presiding elders. It is rumored that once in a while a wealthy layman or a board of Church officials undertakes to say who shall come to this place or go to that. But our present senior bishop declares that in twenty-five years he has known no such instance. For the most part, at least, preachers and people live faithfully up to their compact with one another and leave the whole question of the appointments

to the impartial mediation of the bishops and their recognized advisers.

English and Canadian Methodists are sometimes puzzled, and naturally so, to know why it is that in a republican country authority so unusual is put into the hands of a small class of men. If I offer an explanation, you will not suppose for one moment that I am making an indecorous boast or suggesting an invidious comparison. What suits our conditions very well might not suit you at all. Suffer me, then, with this disclaimer in mind, to say a words *ad rem.*

1. The itinerancy needs a strong executive. Looked at from a merely human standpoint, it ought in any case to break down. That it has lasted for more than one hundred years is just cause for wonder. To make it most effective it must be vigorously administered. We do not fear to give a large grant of power to our chief pastors, provided we hedge it about with restrictions and limitations that render the abuse of it a virtual impossibility.

2. Fortunately for us, the men whom we have heretofore chosen to lead and guide our hosts have been, without exception, both capable and upright in their high office. If the mere suspicion of their incompetency and unfaithfulness should get a general lodgment in the mind of the Church, the system could not survive for a decade. We are profoundly deferential to a government of law, but would not tolerate for one day the assumption and exercise of personal prerogatives.

3. Our bishops are the work of our own hands. They are not made for us; we make them for our-

selves. We do not claim for them the warrant of express divine authorization. The cry of "No bishop, no Church" is a bigot's cry. In common with all Methodists, while holding fast to the rich and fruitful conception of the historical continuity of the Christian Church, we utterly scout and repudiate the thin and vaporous conceit of tactual succession. Even if it could be proved that there is such a succession—as it cannot be—we frankly avow that we are not in it, and we are glad of it. When the next business revival comes, we ought, in all justice, to take up a general collection for the purpose of building a monument to the memory of that good bishop of London who refused to ordain Mr. Wesley's preachers for North America. If he had yielded to the earnest solicitations of our pious founder, he would have inoculated us with the successional virus—a catastrophe the bare contemplation of which is enough to make a good Methodist shudder.

I repeat it, Mr. President, that our bishops do not look for their title deeds in the confused and musty records of a medieval ecclesiasticism. In the exercise of our God-given rights as Christian men we elect them, ordain them, prescribe their functions, and fix legal limitations to their authority. We are glad that the first in the line was set apart by John Wesley, who stood in a unique providential relation to the great revival movement out of which our Church had its birth. But we do not admit that the validity of our episcopacy or of our other ministerial orders rests upon the action of that great man. A wise conservatism dictated the propriety of looking to him for

counsel and direction at a critical moment in our history; yet in the last analysis of the principles involved we had a perfect right to do for ourselves what he did for us.

Before concluding this address, which is already growing too long, I must add that it would be a serious mistake to suppose that everything is well with us. Southern Methodism may claim to be a true Church of Jesus Christ, but the fact remains that it is far from being such a Church as it ought to be. There are many goats in the flock of sheep, "whose beards are sprouting down toward hell against God's dreadful, separating judgment day." We confess the truth with unfeigned sorrow. Nor do we dare affirm that the general average of religious life among us is up to the proper level. Worldliness creeps in at a thousand points. Subtle, elusive, persistent, it defies even the most stringent statutes that are framed to suppress it, and slips like an invisible spirit through the finest meshes of prohibitory legislation. The mad rush for wealth has drowned many of our people in destruction and perdition, and the fatal allurement of ungodly pleasures has drawn many others away from the simplicity that is in Christ. Some whose parents or grandparents were fished up out of the depths of social obscurity through the faithful agency of humble circuit riders have become so ambitious to move and shine in what they are pleased to call "the upper circles of society" that they are willing to forget their fealty to Jesus Christ and their obligations to Methodism. In some places, not many, the conditions are such from all these causes as to force the true pastor to cry out: "O that my head

were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" We solicit an interest in your prayers that we may become indeed a pure Church, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

Up to this time we have suffered little disturbance from "the higher criticism." But, as a matter of course, we cannot hope that this exemption will be permanent. The battle is on and must be fought to a finish. In due time even the most conservative body feels the force of whatever disputes and debates are going on in the world. Whether a people bred from infancy to believe that the Bible *is* the word of God can make the transition to the position that the Bible *contains* the word of God without suffering loss and damage, is a question that has not yet been settled. Only the actual issue can enable us to give a satisfactory answer. In any event we shall not be guilty of the folly of taking a stand against the results of sound and reverent scholarship. Whatever can be proved true, we are bound to accept; whatever can be shown to be false, we are equally bound to reject. But we shall not be in a hurry to shift our ground. It will be ample time to do that when the men who are most competent to collate, weigh, and sift the facts shall have pronounced a final judgment. In the meantime our attitude is not one of stupid indifference as to the result, but rather one of the profoundest concern. With whatever intelligence we can command we shall follow the course of the struggle. The opinion is general among us that the discussion of the higher criticism from the pulpit, involving as it does the statement of many facts and

principles which even the most cultivated of our congregations are scarcely prepared to comprehend, is an admirable way of producing a generation of skeptics. The pulpit should give itself to the proclamation of assured truths, and not to the dissemination of doubtful theories. We feel certain that the final result of the conflict, through whatever stages it may pass, will be a firmer and purer faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

We are affected like the rest of the world, yet probably less than the rest, by the contentions that are springing up between capital and labor. As our civilization grows older and more complex, the natural tendency is toward the separation of society into classes. The old, frank, and brotherly democracy which was once our boast seems to be in danger of passing away. We are threatened on the one hand with an aristocracy whose sole title to recognition is found, not in noble blood, nor in eminent services to the commonwealth, nor in wide learning, nor in high character, but simply in vulgar and shoddyish wealth; and on the other hand with a rabble of serfs, tramps, and paupers who have lost all hope and cherish no ambition except to be fed out of the public crib. I regret to be compelled to admit that, in view of such conditions, a number of our preachers have become amateur political economists and, without adequate knowledge of that intricate science, are seeking to control public opinion by dogmatic deliverances from the pulpit. On this subject, as on others, it remains true that no man knows any more than he has learned, and that not even the sanctity of the ministry can invest crude and foolish notions with

superior right to be heard. After all, while we ought to be deeply interested in whatever affects the social and industrial welfare of the whole people, it is still true that the Church of Jesus Christ is somewhat more than a reform club, and that the preaching of an unearthly gospel is the best remedy for all earthly ills.

The whisky traffic is one of the chief curses of our times. With us, as with you, it is organized, lawless, and defiant. One of our most eminent men has said: "We must put it down or it will put us down." The Discipline of our Church prohibits our members absolutely and on pain of expulsion from engaging in the nefarious business, and also classifies the use of ardent spirits as a beverage under the head of immorality. Our preachers almost to a man are teetotalers. About one-half of our territory is under some form of prohibition. In the State of Mississippi, for example, seventy counties out of seventy-six have closed the saloons. In Georgia over ninety counties out of one hundred and thirty have done the same. In Tennessee and other States we are running in a like direction. The one thing that delays our final victory over the liquor power is the presence of so large a mass of ignorant and purchasable voters. If they were out of the way, the problem would become easy of solution.

In addition to the foregoing ills that beset us in common with the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the world, there are others that belong to us alone. The Civil War raised nearly as many questions as it settled. Chief among these is the relation between two races living side by side, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, enjoying exactly the same

civil rights, and yet as socially distinct as if they were in different worlds. I know that it is impossible in the brief space at my command to say anything on this subject that will not need to be taken with qualification. The more I ponder the matter, the less I am disposed to dogmatize about it. The only persons I have ever met who thought themselves perfectly competent to settle it offhand were ignoramuses who had given it no serious attention.

Those of you who have sought to read the larger lessons of history will not suppose for one moment that a social and political upheaval, the vastest in modern times, could take place without much strife, disorder, and bloodshed. When the tremendous changes that have been wrought in the fabric of our institutions are considered, the wonder is not that they have been accompanied with so much violence, but with so little.

As a Southern man I bow my head and confess with shame that we have been disgraced these twenty years past by many crimes. Nor do I speak one thing here and another at home. As much as any man on the continent, and as vigorously, I have denounced all forms of illegal and violent dealing with the colored people. I also make bold to affirm that the outrages to which I have alluded do not in any sense meet with the approbation of the Christian people of the Southern States. We are no more responsible for them than British Christians are for the opium trade in China or the slaughtering of the Matabeles by the thousand in South Africa.

Nor is it true that the 7,000,000 negroes are so many angels in ebony who are persecuted by their white

neighbors for their superior virtues. The race is not without noble and amiable traits. Individual members of it reach the altitudes of character. To speak an unkind or coarse word of it would be a thing I should not know how to do. On the whole it is making progress, slowly yet surely. But no sensible man supposes that it will leap at once to the front rank of civilization or fly to those summits of power which English-speaking people have reached by the most gradual steps through nearly two millenniums of progress. And in the vast host there are scores of thousands in whose breasts the passions of tropical savagery still rage.

There are certain large facts which I beg you to contemplate as showing, in spite of indications which seem to you to look in another direction, the sincere friendliness of the Southern people toward their brothers in black. First, the fifteen Southern States have taxed themselves since the war in the sum of $50,000,000 to educate the children of their former slaves. If this fact has any parallel in human history, bring it out. Secondly, the colored people have themselves accumulated property worth £50,000,000 of English money. Would that have been possible in a country where the rights of person and property were not respected?

But I must close. Let me say, in conclusion, that we look hopefully to the future. We are not whining pessimists nor atrabilious saints. The world, it seems to us, is getting better and not worse, is swinging forward into the light and not receding into the darkness. This is the best century that it has ever seen, and the last quarter of it is better than the first. It is more

glorious to be living in America now than in the Athens of Pericles, or in the Rome of Cæsar Augustus, or in England during the wide and spacious times of Queen Elizabeth. The golden age is ahead of us. On some future generation it will dawn with undreamed-of splendor. God is still on his throne. The world belongs to him and not to the devil. Let us be jubilant in the prospects before us. It is a time to shout and sing:

"We're soldiers fighting for our God,
Let trembling cowards fly;
We'll stand unbroken, firm, and fixed,
With Christ to live and die."

My dear brethren, may God bless you in the midst of your toils! In the most important respects we are one with you, claiming a common inheritance of English law, literature and civilization, and a common interest in our blessed Methodism. You under your northern skies and amid the virgin whiteness of your wintry snows, and we where the southern sun woos the magnolia into its perfect beauty and fills the orange with its nectar, will not cease to stand in the panoplied strength of Christian righteousness, fighting for all good, fighting against all evil, distrustful of ourselves, confident in the Rock of our salvation, and looking ever with longing eyes and beating hearts to our release from toil and our entrance into the many mansions which our Lord has gone to prepare for us.

II.

SALUTATIONS TO OUR TWIN SISTER OF THE NORTH.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. iv. 4-6.)

SALUTATIONS TO OUR TWIN SISTER OF THE NORTH.

[Fraternal address delivered before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Chicago, Ill., May, 1900.]

Mr. President, Venerable Bishops, and Honorable Brethren: My credentials, which have just been read in your hearing, certify that I come to you as the official bearer of fraternal salutations from the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. If I were to conceal my belief that it is a high honor to have been sent on such an errand, I should be guilty of a piece of unmanly insincerity. It is, moreover, most agreeable to my feelings to stand on this platform and look squarely into the faces of this body of Christian men without the slightest misgiving as to how my presence is regarded, but with the definite conviction that my welcome here is as warm as genuine fraternity can make it.

At the same time I must modestly confess that in the outset I hesitated to assume a task the proper discharge of which calls for the exercise of far nobler faculties than any which I dare claim to possess. If my poor utterance should seem to you to fall below the level of such an occasion, let me crave in advance the grace of your brotherly indulgence and beg you to look away from me to the million and a half true and honest Southern Methodists who stand behind me and whose mouthpiece and organ of expression I am. You

may depend upon it that they would not have commissioned me hither if they had not been deeply interested in you and your work. As they are only human creatures, it must be admitted that they have their faults. But it cannot be set down against them that they lack frankness. They have never acquired the pernicious habit of professing a friendship which they do not feel, nor have they learned the villainous art of using ambiguous words as a cloak for their real thoughts. Nothing could be more foreign to their spirit than to take a conscious part in a mere quadrennial farce having no significance of any sort beyond the brief hour required for its performance and affronting Almighty God by its hollow hypocrisy. If they should ever conclude that this interchange of denominational courtesies has ceased to be an open exhibition of Christian brotherhood and has degenerated into a tiresome and formal parade, they would be the first to suggest its discontinuance.

Speaking, then, in their name and representing what I know to be their true frame of mind, I give you fervent greeting as brethren beloved and fellow laborers in the kingdom and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that grace and peace may rest upon you, and that all the labor of your hands may have a blessed issue in the glory of God and the salvation of men. Now I make bold to borrow the very words of the apostle to the Gentiles and to use them as the medium and vehicle of sentiments which are too deep to find adequate outlet through any unconsecrated forms of speech:

"Wherefore we also, after we heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in our prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

It is my bounden duty, Mr. President, as it is also my great pleasure, to return to you our hearty thanks for the visit of those distinguished brethren, the Rev. Dr. Joseph F. Berry and the Hon. Jonathan P. Dolliver, whom you were kind enough to depute to our General Conference assembled in the city of Baltimore in May, 1898. Whether the manner in which they were entertained while among us was perfectly cordial, I leave it for them to declare. But both courtesy and truth require me to affirm that you could have scarcely selected two gentlemen more fit in every way to make a favorable impression upon our people. At any rate, we shall decline to believe that you have any better representatives than they until we have had ocular and audible demonstration of the fact.

Dr. Berry sets the pace for the multitudinous army

of Epworth Leaguers, and must needs, therefore, be alive and awake in all the fibers of his being. As an editor he is bright without being flippant, orthodox without being hidebound, and an intense Methodist without being bigoted. His message to us was wise and weighty, worthy of himself and worthy of you.

Mr. Dolliver, born in a parsonage and bred on a four weeks' circuit, though still on the sunny side of fifty, has long been an influential member of the Federal House of Representatives, an orator the tropical splendors of whose eloquence fascinate every audience before which he stands, and a statesman so clean in character and so broad of vision as to be well fitted for carrying the gravest dignities of the republic. We do not forget, Mr. President, that, in spite of his long residence in Iowa, he is a native of old Virginia; and we may be excused for fancying that in his golden sentences we can hear some far-off echoes of those tremendous periods with which Patrick Henry, in the Revolutionary era, shook the American Continent and astonished the world. If in the white heat of our enthusiasm we cheered everything that our highly esteemed brother said so lustily as to make him think that we were ready to incorporate it all in the creed, we must not be held too closely to the record. Some of us were quite possibly in the condition that day of the old Tennesseean who, at the close of a stirring sermon, made a liberal subscription to the support of the preacher and, when he was afterwards called upon to pay it, excused himself by saying: "I was a little too religious just then to be capable of taking care of my own interests."

And now, Mr. President, what more shall I say?

Usage makes it proper that I should bring you some report as to how it fares with us. But I cannot suppose it likely that you would be seriously concerned in any mere statistical display of our strength; and I remember, besides, the striking aphorism of Canning, that "nothing is so false as facts except figures." Were I to affect the role of census taker, I might leave either an inadequate or an exaggerated impression upon your minds. If my memory serves me right, there is Biblical warrant also for the notion that ecclesiastical census takers are not the special favorites of Divine Providence—a fact which may find its explanation in their disposition to suppress or minify whatever collides with their prejudices, and to exploit and emphasize whatever lends support to their favorite opinions.

But it requires no slightest departure from absolute veracity to affirm that by many tokens the Lord God of our fathers abides with us. The pillar of cloud still goes before us by day, and the pillar of fire, in all its ancient glory, still flames on our eyes through the darkness of the darkest nights. With many things to depress and dismay us, we have also unnumbered reasons for abounding hopefulness; and we cannot bring ourselves to believe that He who has led us through the storms and tempests of the past means to desert us now. That was a just and wise inference drawn by the wife of Manoah when her husband was shaken with terror at the ascent of the angel of the Lord in the sacrificial flame: "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things." The main lesson of his-

tory is a lesson of confidence in Jehovah. It is not possible that pessimism should get a permanent lodgment in men's minds until they have ceased to believe in the living God, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, seated now as of old on his throne, high and lifted up, with the trailing glories of his vestments of light filling the temple of the universe, and the seraphim veiling their faces with their wings in his presence, and crying to one another day and night: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." We believe that our help is in the name of the Lord that made heaven and earth. And our deepest prayer is that of the Hebrew psalmist: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come and save us."

Since 1866 we have grown from 427,000 communicants to 1,476,000. During this whole period we have had but one year of arrested growth. In 1898 the General Minutes showed a decrease in the membership of about 8,000. But in 1899 the tide again turned in the right direction with an increase of over 6,000. All the indications are that we shall go out of the century with 1,500,000 names on our Church registers. Sorry as we are that the figures are not greater, we are grateful and happy that they are not less. The causes which have lately led to an arrest in the rate of growth in the various Protestant denominations—our own among the rest—are quite too multiform and complicated to be set forth in a single word. It is not worth while to pay much attention to the self-conceited the-

orist who thinks that he can put the whole case in a nutshell. Nevertheless, the situation is one that excites painful apprehension and demands careful and prayerful investigation.

Our missionary work in China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Cuba, Brazil, and elsewhere is prospering more largely than at any former period of our history. Slowly but surely we are coming to grasp the full force of the truth that the business of the Church of Jesus Christ is not to nurse itself, but to evangelize the world. What St. Paul said of his personal mission is also in some measure true of the whole company of the faithful: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." The adoption of any narrower program than the one which is thus so magnificently outlined is sure to bring on spiritual paralysis and to end at last in utter death. This whole world, with every rational creature in it, belongs to our Lord by right of redemption, and it is the business of his Church to see to it that as speedily as possible he comes into possession of his own. For foreign and domestic missions, including the contributions of the Woman's Board, which are managed with very great ability, we collect and disburse not far from

$600,000 per annum. Our Board of Church Extension, organized in 1882, grows constantly stronger. It now has fixed loan funds aggregating over $200,000, and gathers from the congregations annually about $70,000 for current needs.

Our publishing interests are in a reasonably healthy condition, but it must be acknowledged that our people at large do not show so intelligent an appreciation of this arm of power as could be desired. The conviction grows upon the thoughtful among us that we must make a larger and better use of the press in the future than we have done in the past. Whoever can devise a feasible plan for effecting this end will be at least as well entitled to canonization as some people that have actually passed the scrutiny and been enrolled among the saints. That old story of Martin Luther's throwing his inkstand at the devil is symbolic of many meanings. Is it amiss to affirm that the sturdy reformer was wiser than he knew? One thing is certain: the devil is constantly throwing his inkstand at the Church. Let us be sure to make the game as lively for him as we can. A single other hint may be let slip in passing: the success of our Book Concerns is to be measured, not so much by the lengthening list of their publications, nor by the increase of their capital stock, as by the extent to which they actually get into circulation a literature that is so sound in substance and so attractive in form as to command the attention of the reading public.

Our schools and colleges, in spite of many embarrassments, have done and are doing a great work. The energy, persistency, and self-denial of the men who

have them in charge deserve the highest praise. The educators of Methodism have been to the full as faithful and as useful as any other class of her servants. It is my hope and belief that a new generation of trained and competent teachers is coming on who will prove fit to be compared with Stephen Olin, Landon C. Garland, Henry B. Bascom, Augustus B. Longstreet, Robert Paine, George F. Pierce, Ephraim E. Wiley, James A. Duncan, William M. Wightman, Francis A. Mood, and others, the fine old masters who in their own characters set before our Southern youth a living illustration of what Isaac Taylor so finely described as "the triple nobility of nature, culture, and faith." All the signs go to show that we shall succeed in raising the million and a half dollars that we have asked as a twentieth century thank offering for educational purposes. Only a few weeks ago Vanderbilt University received a bequest of about $200,000 from Mrs. Mary J. Furman, of Nashville, which is the third large gift that it has had from elect Methodist women, to say nothing of the fact that the final and controlling consideration which led Commodore Vanderbilt to open his purse to it so royally in the first instance was the desire to gratify the wishes of his excellent Methodist wife, who, as good providence would have it, was also a cousin of the late Mrs. Bishop McTyeire. Trinity College, Durham, N. C., has been the recipient in recent years of $400,000 or $500,000 from Mr. Washington Duke and his sons, and will probably get whatever sums are needed for its further development. Five or six of our other colleges have passed the experimental stage with good equipments, larger or smaller endowments, and

the prospect of increasing support from many quarters. The rest are having a hard time trying to make ends meet. Some of them will survive and flourish, and some, it is to be feared, will go the way of so many similar institutions in the South and West. As Methodism believes in a gospel of light, it must be true to the old traditions and educate. Let the State do what it will, the Church is bound to look out for the higher training of her youth. She has some lessons to teach them which the State has no voice to convey, and at whatever cost she must sustain, enlarge, and endow her seats of learning. Is it a note of narrowness to add that they in turn must be true and loyal to her interests? A Church college is no better than any other, unless it *is* better. That it should venture to call for ecclesiastical patronage and yet refuse to submit to ecclesiastical guidance is an anomaly not to be tolerated. What right has it to ask for anything more in the way of support than it is willing to give in the way of service? We Methodists are at the farthest possible remove from narrow sectarianism, for which let us devoutly thank God. But this is no reason why we should not openly fly our denominational banner over all the institutions of every sort that depend upon us for maintenance.

The Sunday school cause was never better looked after among us than at the present time. Each year marks an advance in the number of schools, of teachers, and of scholars. That there are still grave deficiencies in the quality of the instruction given and the other work done through this agency is lamentably true, but that there are also marked and constant improvements

is equally beyond dispute. My candid opinion is that our Sunday school literature is equal in its range and virility to the best in the United States. Another fact furnishes ground for gratitude: there is a widespread and deepening feeling among all concerned that the supreme end to be sought after is the conversion of the children to Christ, and that all efforts which do not look to this consummation are a mere beating of the air.

We were a little behind you in adopting the Epworth League, and it is hardly to be expected that we shall ever quite catch up. There be some among us whose solicitude on the subject is not sufficiently keen to cause them to lose sleep. The fact that the bulk of our members live in the country, and often far apart from one another, renders it difficult to bring the young people together except on the Lord's day; and there are other reasons lying in the peculiarities of our social life that militate in some measure against the perfect success of the League movement. It must not be inferred from this remark that our labors herein have been marked by failure. Far from it. We have in the aggregate an intelligent and consecrated host of young men and women (about 250,000) banded together under the inspiring motto of "All for Christ" and following in the wake of a most competent leadership. The modesty, the docility, the "sweet reasonableness" which they have generally displayed in their relation to the pastors and others in authority is, we take it, an omen for good, as is also their unwearied zeal in all manner of good works.

If asked as to the character of our pulpit, I should

be compelled to give a qualified reply. My impression is that we have fewer men of supreme preaching ability than formerly. There is no one quite like Bascom, or Pierce, or Kavanaugh, or Doggett, or Marvin, or Munsey, towering up head and shoulders above his brethren. But there are some who as expounders and proclaimers of the Word of God are the equals, if not the superiors, of any of their predecessors; and there is a large class who for vigor of thought, lucidity of expression, and fervor of spirit are workmen that need not to be ashamed. That the general average of the preaching has improved is certain. If there has been any serious loss, it is found in the failure to look for immediate results as the fathers did. Possibly, but not certainly, this is an inevitable consequence of changed conditions. It calls for inquiry. The great majority of our ministers preach a simple and unadulterated gospel—"Christ and him crucified," "Jesus and the resurrection"—with a firm persuasion that it is "the power of God unto salvation." Not many of them waste time on alien themes or squander their strength in running after vain fads. The rule with them is to keep in the middle of the road. It is only now and then that a brother makes his appearance who, without scientific training, cherishes a conceit of competency to teach the scientists, as Gideon taught the elders of Succoth, "with thorns and briers of the wilderness"; or, without knowledge of history, politics, and economics, dreams that he possesses the ability to reconstruct society from the foundations up; or, without more than the scantest acquaintance with the wide field of literature, has the crude audacity to spin out a series

of thin and vaporous discourses on "The Ethics of Poetry" or "The Religious Aims of the Great Novelists." Such ministers soon run their course in our latitude. The average Southerner refuses to go to church to listen to a stale rehash of the daily newspaper, or a bungling lecture on evolution, or a milk-and-water essay in *belles lettres*. He will tolerate a good deal of dullness and even of stupidity if it has a distinctly religious flavor in it, but he has no taste for trivial semi-secularities in the house of God.

The moral tone of our ministry is, on the whole, most excellent. A cleaner or more upright body of men does not exist in this modern world. As a rule, they are not only correct in outward deportment, but are also experimentally familiar with the spiritualities of religion and utterly devoted to Jesus Christ. They have had a severe schooling in poverty, in self-denial, in all manner of hardships; but it has yielded in them the peaceable fruit of righteousness. You can never know, Mr. President, at what a terrible cost the interests of Methodism and of the kingdom of Christ in general have been protected in the South since the close of the Civil War. But it must now be clear to all open-minded persons that it was better for our manhood that we should stand by our own religious organizations and share in all respects the lot of the people than that we should desert them in the day of disaster with the aim and hope of a missionary stipend from other sources. Nothing could have so separated us from our struggling flocks as the knowledge on their part that we were drawing pay from beyond the Ohio. The course of events has fully vindicated the wisdom

of our action. Without a helping hand or a cheering word from all the world, and with a chorus of censure and condemnation that was often loud in our ears, we have held the field and saved the situation, demonstrating afresh that a faithful ministry can subsist wherever a Christian people can live, and that the toils and sacrifices of such a ministry are never in vain.

We have not latterly introduced any marked changes into our polity, and we have not *had to*. As far back as 1866 we fell into a temporary spell of radicalism and overhauled our house in various particulars, abolishing, not, it is true, the law of probation, but the hard and fast six months' limit, removing the class meeting test of membership and putting that particular means of grace on the same basis with others, extending the pastoral limit from two to four years, and introducing voluntarily and without compulsion or pressure of any kind equal lay representation in the General Conference and effective lay representation in the Annual Conferences. At that time things were in so ill a shape with us that it was thought we could not make them much worse by any alterations and might possibly improve them. But it would be a grave error to infer that the leaders in the New Orleans General Conference were simply burrowing in the dark. On the contrary, they were men of the highest intelligence, who for long years had been going over all the ground in the light of the New Testament and of ecclesiastical history; and they were fully convinced in their own minds that on every one of the points mentioned they were moving in accordance with the drift and spirit of the gospel and responding to the imperative demands

of the age. We rejoice in the fact that in respect to these particular issues they thus put our Church far in advance of any other branch of Methodism in the world, and paved the way along which all the rest have since been moving with the steadiness of gravitation. There is nobody in our ranks that would even think of going back to the old order. Especially is this the case with regard to lay delegation. Our laymen have proved vastly beneficial to us in the deliberations of the General Conference. Quite unexpectedly, they have always been a trifle more conservative than the ministers and more than once have put a decided check upon hasty and ill-conceived legislation. Nor have they been less useful in the administrative work of the Annual Conferences. We simply could not do without them, and we are by no means minded to try the experiment.

There is another point concerning which it may not be improper for me to speak a word in this connection, though in doing so I must be allowed to disclaim the slightest disposition to thrust any impertinent suggestions into the course of your discussions. The General Conference of 1854, at the instigation of that Ajax Telamon of Methodism, Dr. William A. Smith, of Virginia, by mere legislative action, invested the episcopacy with a veto power, appending the following new proviso to the Restrictive Rules:

> When any rule or regulation is adopted by the General Conference which, in the opinion of the bishops, is unconstitutional, the bishops may present to the General Conference their opinion to such a rule or regulation with the reasons therefor; and if, after taking the objections and reasons of the

bishops, two-thirds of the members of the Conference present shall vote in favor of the rule or regulation so objected to, it shall have the force of law; otherwise it shall be null and void.

This was in general line with the declaration made by Bishop Joshua Soule in 1824, as follows: "The General Conference is not the proper judge of the constitutionality of its own acts. If the General Conference be the sole judge of such questions, then there are no bounds to its power." But it will be seen that, after all, the final power to decide on the constitutionality of proposed legislation was left by the action of 1854 in the hands of a two-thirds majority of the General Conference.

The case stood so until 1870, when a resolution was introduced instructing the Committee on Episcopacy to inquire, first, whether this proviso had been legally introduced into the Discipline, and, secondly, whether any additional legislation in regard to it was necessary. On the fourteenth day of the session Dr. Leroy M. Lee, nephew of Jesse Lee and a famous man in his own right, brought in a report from the committee, a great State paper dealing with every phase of the subject in a most masterly way, not only maintaining that the General Conference is incompetent by its own action to add any proviso to the Restrictive Rules, but going farther and insisting, *inter alia,* on the following positions:

The veto power does not *inhere* in the episcopal office. . . . The General Conference is a dependent and responsible body—dependent for its being and authority upon the original body of elders and responsible to them for its fidelity in the use of the powers delegated to it. But without some provision of the Constitution such as was aimed to be estab-

lished in the proviso under consideration, there is no legitimate or authoritative mode either of questioning the constitutionality of its acts or of admitting them to another tribunal for adjudication. And in the absence of suitable provision for this purpose the General Conference may exercise the powers, even if it does not claim the right of determining the constitutionality of its own acts; and in such an event the General Conference absorbs all power into itself, its responsibility ceases, and it can "revoke, alter, change, or destroy" even the Constitution itself at its own will and by its own act. Such power is not given to it nor intended to be given. But all this power would have been given if in what was given was included the right of determining the constitutionality of its own acts. The original body of elders delegated everything of the powers they possessed, if they delegated this power. They reserved nothing to themselves if they did not reserve the right of determining the constitutionality of the acts of the delegated body, if they did not reserve the right to hold their agents and representatives in the grasp of a grave, dignified, and ceaseless responsibility to themselves as the ultimate and only legitimate judge of their acts and of their fidelity to the engagements and obligations of the Constitution made and provided for their special guidance and government. It is incredible that such a body of men as those who inaugurated the Constitution of the Church and checked and restrained the General Conference with such limitations to its acts and such restraints upon its power could have been so incautious and inconsiderate as to deprive themselves so utterly of any further and all future relations to and control over those to whom they intrusted their rights and delegated their powers. Such a supposition would be an assault upon their integrity and intelligence as unjust as it is unmerited.

To set specific limits alike to the power of the General Conference and to the authority of the bishops, a new proviso, prepared by Dr. Lee, was then passed by a two-thirds vote of the General Conference and sent

around to the Annual Conferences, where it received a three-fourths vote. It reads as follows:

Provided, That when any rule or regulation is adopted by the General Conference which, in the opinion of the bishops, is unconstitutional, the bishops may present to the Conference which passed said rule or regulation their objections thereto with their reasons; and if then the General Conference shall by a two-thirds vote adhere to its action on said rule or regulation, it shall then take the course prescribed for altering a restrictive rule; and if thus passed upon affirmatively, the bishops shall announce that such rule or regulation takes effect from that time.

Twenty-four years elapsed from the date of its passage before the power which it bestows on the bishops was ever called into use. In 1894 a bill which indirectly made it possible that a layman should sit on the trial committee of a minister was held to be obnoxious to the Fifth Restrictive Rule and vetoed, and the General Conference took no further action in the premises. Some rather amusing consequences have followed upon this single exercise of the episcopal veto. We thought we knew exactly what our Constitution was, and some of us were a little inclined to make game of your perplexities thereto anent. But it turns out that we are not so certain about it as we were, and we now have a learned commission at work for the purpose of reaching a determination. There are wise men among us who rest easier of nights because of this detent in our machinery.

If time and circumstances allowed, there are many other features of our ecclesiastical life and methods which I should be glad to bring to your attention. But I have heard that it is possible for a fraternal delegate

to speak too long, and I shall therefore begin to consider the propriety of bringing my address to a close. Before doing so, however, I must be permitted to say that you and we alike have a rich common inheritance, and that hereafter nothing for good or ill can happen to either one of us that will not materially affect the other also.

1. We have a common Methodism. Everything beyond 1844 belongs to us both alike. Wesley and Whitefield, Embury and Strawbridge, Coke and Asbury, McKendree and Soule, and the whole brotherhood of itinerants that rode round the continent, preaching the most rational, the most joyous, the most commanding gospel that this world has ever heard—all are ours. The achievements that they have wrought cannot be selfishly and exclusively claimed by either section. If the South sent Freeborn Garretson and Jesse Lee and Peter Akers and John P. Durbin to the North, the North sent Joshua Soule and William Winans and Jefferson Hamilton and Stephen Olin to the South, the last to be converted in a humble Methodist home in Carolina and sent back to his native New England as a burning and shining light. The tides of personal activity and of religious influence flowed backward and forward over all imaginary lines. In those early days we were one in every sense. Nor can any unprejudiced man read the proceedings of the great Conference that issued in disruption without feeling that the participants in the debates, instead of being angry partisans anxious to precipitate a revolution, were thoughtful and godly men most solicitous to avoid such a catastrophe. What was done was done in sorrow, not in

anger. The parting caused a thousand heartaches. The anger came later and flamed out at last in bitter and passionate speech. Many things were said by your representatives and by ours that in our cooler moments we cannot possibly justify, things that must have grieved the heart of the compassionate Christ who died for us. They ought to be buried in oblivion. The day for utterance of that sort is gone. We know one another better now, and we understand the men of half a century ago better than they understood themselves. In our years of separation we have doubtless drifted apart in some outward and noticeable particulars. But a careful study of the two Episcopal Methodisms, made in large part on the ground where they are both actually at work, has served to convince me that, after all, the differences between them are infinitesimal when compared with the points in which they agree. Superficially disunited, they are yet linked together by a thousand ties as close and holy as the love of God can make them. Even in outward aspects they are as much alike as two handsome sisters, each one of whom, while retaining her individuality of expression and bearing, also carries all the family marks. Why should there be any unkind or jealous feelings between them? This is the year of grace 1900, and the world is sweeping forward at a rate which makes the old contentions look distant and small. The only people, North or South, who still cherish the hates and discords of 1844 or 1861 are those who, like the Gadarine demoniacs, "make their dwelling among the tombs." Far be it from us who stand fronting the surpassing glories of the future ages to waste our

energies by digging forever in the cold ashes of burned-out controversies. Magnanimity breeds magnanimity by a natural law. It should be our highest aim to provoke one another to love and to good works. Ever since President Henry Wade Rogers appeared before our General Conference at Memphis in 1894 and delivered himself with such Christian fairness on the historical issues between us, we Southern Methodists, not to be outdone in generosity, have been perfectly willing to grant that when you withdrew from us under the terms of a solemn mutual compact "it was a separation and not a secession." Let it stand at that. It may interest you to know that our last General Conference fully ratified the work of the Joint Commission on Federation and continued our commission with full power to act. Let us devoutly pray that the final outcome may be so perfect an adjustment of our misunderstandings as will destroy our lingering rivalries, remove the last vestige of bitterness, and enable us to deliver the full force of our glorious Methodism upon any given point at a given time. What specific measures may be adopted to secure this result is a matter of small moment. But it will be an unspeakable disgrace to us if in the face of all our bitter and banded foes we waste an ounce of energy or a dollar of money in fighting one another.

2. We have a common country. And what a country it is! Stretching away through endless leagues from the Penobscot and the Kennebec on the east to the Sacramento and the Columbia on the west, and from the Great Lakes on the north to the Florida Keys on the south, with its outlying fringes of possessions and de-

pendencies, it is the mightiest seat of empire that the world has ever seen. The allegation is sometimes brought against the Southerner that he is naturally sectional and provincial in his temper; and, truth to tell, he does love his own sunny home with an ardor that colder folk find it hard to understand. But he is none the less a national patriot for all that. What is patriotism but provincialism on a large scale? Passionate local attachments are the raw material out of which affection for one's whole country is manufactured. There are no better Americans than those who dwell below the Potomac, and none more ready when the emergency arises to make sacrifices for the glory and honor of these United States. They revere the common flag which flies in beauty and triumph over sea and land, and they devoutly trust that wherever it is spread to the breeze it may be the symbol not merely of American authority and power, but also of American laws and institutions, meaning not one thing here and another yonder, but liberty, opportunity, and progress everywhere. For they have taken to heart those pregnant words of a great historian: "From all the history of the European world since the later days of the Roman republic, there is no more important lesson to be learned than this—that it is impossible for a free people to govern a dependent people despotically without endangering its own freedom."

3. Behind us we have a common history. Though each one of the original colonies started as a separate and independent settlement, yet almost from the very beginning they were all drawn more or less closely together by forces that were as irresistible as the move-

ment of the tides. The Revolutionary War drove them into a loose confederation, and the Constitutional Convention of 1787, when its action had been ratified by the assent of the various sovereign States, bound them into a close Federal Union. Thenceforward the streams of their political life flowed more and more into one broad channel. There was never any more perfect buncombe than the threadbare talk of two distinct civilizations—Puritan and Cavalier—radiating from Plymouth Rock and Jamestown respectively and clashing with one another from the beginning. Real Cavaliers were always scarce in the South, even in Virginia, which knew them not outside of the tidewater region. In our early Tennessee history we had only two of any prominence, the brothers William and Willie Blount, whose great-grandfather was a follower of King Charles and fled to North Carolina after the establishment of the commonwealth. In Kentucky, unless I am much at fault, they had none at all. The South was settled mainly by middle-class English, Scotch-Irish, German, and Huguenot immigrants.

And not all New Englanders were Puritans even in blood, much less in temper and disposition. Such men as Caleb Cushing and Benjamin F. Butler were also types and stood each for a large class. It is worth noting that even Daniel Webster, the New Hampshire Colossus, whose reply to Hayne was one of the inspirations of my boyhood, had nearly all the personal shortcomings that are popularly supposed to be the special inheritance of the Cavalier, and that John C. Calhoun, the incarnation of South Carolina, chaste as an icicle and incorruptible as Aristides, had all the

virtues that are commonly attributed to the Puritans. As to the West, its citizenship from the start has been extremely composite. There is to-day scarcely a community in this State of Illinois that is not now made up in part of men and women whose parents or grandparents came from the South.

May I not say, without suspicion of arrogance or of self-assertion, that in winning this country and creating this government of ours the South did her full share? If I should seem to you to tell only our part of the story, it is because I am firmly convinced that you will not be behindhand in telling yours. And has not each American an undivided interest in every great and noble thing that any American has done? To use the very words of John Fiske, "the first formal defiance of the Stamp Act came from Virginia" in the form of Patrick Henry's "resolves," which were adopted by the House of Burgesses in 1765. At the Congress which convened in New York in the fall of the same year, in response to a circular letter from the Massachusetts Legislature, "it was Christopher Gadsden, of South Carolina, who of all the delegates present took the broadest ground in behalf both of liberty and of united action among the colonies. He objected to sending petitions to Parliament, lest thereby its paramount authority should implicitly and unwillingly be acknowledged." It was Thomas Jefferson who ten years later framed the Declaration of Independence, and Richard Henry Lee who moved its adoption. It was George Washington who in the teeth of the most disheartening conditions held our tattered army together and led it to final victory. Here in Chicago it is proper to add

that it was George Rogers Clarke with his few hundred Virginians who took the Northwest Territory for the nascent republic. As Theodore Roosevelt says ("The Winning of the West"): "Alone and with the very slenderest means he conquered and held a vast and very beautiful region which but for him would have formed a part of a foreign and hostile empire." Had it not been for his far-sighted policy and his indomitable courage, Canada would probably have come down to the Ohio River (and Arthur Edwards might have been born a subject of Queen Victoria).

Mr. Roosevelt frankly adds some further statements that are likely to startle those who have not taken the pains to investigate the facts. The subject is so important that an extensive quotation may be pardoned:

> The way in which the southern part of our Western country—that is, all the land south of the Ohio, and from thence on to the Rio Grande and the Pacific—was won and settled stands quite alone. The region north of it was filled up in quite a different manner. The Southwest, including therein what was once simply called the West and afterwards the Middle West, was won by the people themselves, acting as individuals or as groups of individuals, who hewed out their own fortunes in advance of any governmental action. On the other hand, the Northwest, speaking broadly, was acquired by the government, the settlers merely taking possession of what the whole country guaranteed them. The Northwest is essentially a national domain; it is fitting that it should be as it is, not only by position, but by feeling the heart of the nation. North of the Ohio the regular army went first. The settlements grew up behind the shelter of the Federal troops of Harmar, St. Clair, Wayne, and of their successors even to our own day. The wars in which the borderers themselves bore any part were few and trifling compared to the contests

waged by the adventurers who won Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas. In the Southwest the early settlers acted as their own army and supplied both leaders and men. Sevier, Robertson, Clarke, and Boone led their fellow pioneers to battle, as Jackson did afterwards, and Houston did later still. Indeed, the Southwesterners not only won their own soil for themselves, but they were the chief instruments in the original acquisition of the Northwest also. Had it not been for the conquest of the Illinois towns in 1799, we would probably never have had any Northwest to settle. And the huge tract between the Upper Mississippi and the Columbia, then called Upper Louisiana, also fell into our hands only because the Kentuckians and Tennesseeans were resolutely bent upon taking possession of New Orleans either by bargain or by battle. All of our territory lying beyond the Alleghanies, north and south, was first won for us by the Southwesterners, fighting for their own land.

So far Mr. Roosevelt.

When Mr. Jefferson finally made the Louisiana purchase in 1803, the Hon. Josiah Quincy, of Massachusetts, declared that it was a just cause for the secession of the Eastern States, as it was sure to disturb the balance of power in the Union by leading to the formation of at least five or six new commonwealths. Exactly!

To quote Fiske once more:

It was James Madison on whom the leading part of the Federal Convention fell—a young man somewhat less brilliant than Hamilton, but superior to him in sobriety and balance of powers. He used to be called the "Father of the Constitution," and it is true that the government under which we live is more his work than that of any other man.

It was John Marshall whom the same writer declares to be "second to none among all the illustrious jurists of the English race," and of whom he adds: "The

practical working of our Federal Constitution during the first thirty years of the nineteenth century was saved to so great an extent by his profound and luminous decisions that he must be assigned a foremost place among the founders of the Federal Union."

In all our later struggles the South has never once failed to show her hand. The annalists are agreed that as a nation we did not get much honor, except on the sea, out of our second war with Great Britain until the time came for "Old Hickory" with his ragged battalions of Tennesseeans and Kentuckians to smite the Peninsular veterans of Wellington at New Orleans and win a victory the like of which is not found in the history of the world. There has been much talk lately about the amazing mobility of the Boers in South Africa by those who have forgotten, if they ever knew, that General Coffee and two regiments of mounted Tennessee riflemen in December, 1814, marched one hundred and fifty-seven miles in two days in order to reënforce the slender garrison with which Jackson was holding at bay the invading forces under Pakenham.

Of the conflicts that brought us Texas and the great States of the Pacific Slope, it is not necessary to speak, as the record is read of all men. As to the life-and-death wrestle of 1861-65, everybody ought now to be dispassionate enough to see that it was inevitable, and that, though it put the fate of the republic in jeopardy, it furnished on both sides abundant illustrations of everything that is most glorious in human character. The South is not ashamed of her 600,000 sons who "bore bayonets against destiny" as Confederate soldiers, nor will she admit that the cilivization was ready

to decay that could furnish such commanders as Albert Sidney Johnston, Stonewall Jackson, and Robert E. Lee for this grim fighting host. But there is something often lost sight of that I may venture to call to your attention: the Southern States were not solidly on one side. They sent, in round numbers, 400,000 white men into the Union army, and among them such capable captains as George H. Thomas, "the Rock of Chickamauga," and David Farragut, the hero of Mobile Bay. Nay, one of them out of the mighty loins of her common stock bred the Titanic figure of Abraham Lincoln, whose most famous political canvass was made against Stephen A. Douglas, a son of New England. My own State of Tennessee, on whose soil four hundred and sixty-seven battles and skirmishes were fought, was literally rent asunder by the diverging convictions of its citizens. The Congressional district in which I was reared, after raising six or eight picked regiments of Confederates, then furnished more volunteers (not a drafted man among them) for the Federal army than any other Congressional district in the United States.

You cannot forget that in the brief tussle with Spain the first victim was Worth Bagley, in whose patrician veins ran the best blood of the "Old North State;" nor that the man who boldly pushed his way through the Cuban jungle into the Spanish lines at Santiago and made sure of the presence of the ships of Cervera in the inner bay was Victor Blue, of South Carolina; nor that the man who performed the coolest act in naval warfare by sailing the Merrimac into the jaws of death and blowing her up with dynamite was Richmond Pearson Hobson, of Alabama; nor that the gray-headed

veteran who, though burning up with Cuban fever, abandoned his ambulance and rode to the firing line on horseback, and who stoutly resisted every suggestion of retreat, was Joseph Wheeler—of the United States. But enough of this.

4. If behind us there is a common history, before us there lies a common destiny with its common perils. We are all in the same boat. If that thought could only sink deeply enough into our minds, it would at once save us from the petty squabblings which are a disgrace to our humanity and a sin against God. What of the future? As our vision sweeps forward to the utmost edge of the horizon, is everything perfectly clear? Or do storm signals show themselves here and there? He must be blind indeed who does not see that there are breakers ahead, and that there is need for the best seamanship if we expect to weather the gale and reach the port without loss or danger to cargo and crew. To abandon the figure and drop down to literal speech, what are some of the dangers that beset us so threateningly at the present time?

(1) First of all, there is a widespread infidelity penetrating and poisoning the very atmosphere that we breathe and insensibly lowering the victorious tone of religious faith. Sometimes it takes on the form of a scientific negationalism, denying the existence of a personal God—at once immanent and transcendent—and putting in his place either the *caput mortuum* of blind Force or that icy ghost of Deity, "a stream of tendency not ourselves that makes for righteousness," as if anything but an intelligent and self-determining thinker could possibly have created a universe which

only intelligent thought is able to construe. Sometimes it assumes the shape of historical skepticism, subjecting the documentary records of religion to a hard and pitiless dissection which, if universally followed, would cancel all satisfactory knowledge of past events and leave us quite uncertain as to whether we have any solid ground of fact on which to plant the soles of our feet, and yet seeking to console us with the delusive assurance that, though the New Testament be taken away from us, we still have the Christ left. Let there be no misunderstanding here. If the four gospels are not substantially true, then we are building on sand. The cry of "Back to Christ!" may itself be a delusion and a snare. The only Christ to whom it is worth while to go back is not the Christ of unaccredited tradition, nor yet that floating phantom, the so-called Christ of the Christian consciousness, but the homely and familiar Christ who was born in a manger, died on the cross, rose in majesty from the sepulcher, and ascended to the right hand of God. Scholarship has its rights, but it must be reverent as well as learned. You may not dogmatically require it to labor in the interest of preconceived opinions; but you may require that it shall not rudely disturb the great pieties of the world by setting forth incomplete and unverified theories as if they had the authority of final conclusions, and you may insist that it prosecute all its investigations not in the temper of the forum or the market place but in the temper of the closet and the sanctuary.

(2) There is an immense amount of gross practical materialism which is not thoughtful enough to frame

a definite creed, but which, nevertheless, acts upon the assumed belief that the chief end of man is not to "glorify God and enjoy him forever," but to heap up vast riches by fair means or foul and to revel in the luxury which such riches can command. The mad desire for wealth in these United States is an unparalelled phenomenon. Already it has done incalculable harm; and in the future, unless it is checked and stayed, it may work our ruin. Not satisfied with gains that two generations ago would have seemed incredible, it is perpetually clamoring for more. Entering into trusts and combines, it crushes out competition, destroys the small producer or holds him as a victim at its pleasure, limits the output of furnaces and factories to suit its own advantage without any regard for the public welfare, swings its whip over the shoulders of the common toiler and enforces his absolute obedience by the threat of starvation for himself and family, and with boundless rapacity and unabashed impudence forces its way into the halls of Congress and solicits gifts and subsidies from the public treasury. There is, to be sure, a more pleasing side to the picture. Never before in the history of the world were there so many rich men who were also rich toward God, spending their millions for schools and colleges, for libraries and hospitals, for open parks and pleasure grounds, for Churches and missions. But this fact, while it mitigates the evils of the existing conditions, does not in any way abate the need of wide remedial measures. Capital must be taught its duties, and where it will not voluntarily learn them must be forced into line by the strong arm of the law. Nor

less must labor be instructed that, while it may properly organize for worthy ends, it has everything to lose and nothing to gain by repudiating religion, trampling on law, and seeking to secure its ends by methods that are abhorrent to right reason and a menace to the peace and permanency of society.

(3) Certain particular forms of business which are not merely capable of abuse but are positively evil in themselves have secured such a standing before the law, and such a patronage from all classes of citizens as makes them more to be dreaded than pestilence or earthquake. Chief of these is the liquor traffic. It is wholly and incurably bad. Society could better afford to license at every street corner a den of cobras than to give its sanction to the indiscriminate sale of strong drink. The open saloon is a breathing hole of hell. It thrusts temptation into the very faces of the inexperienced and the unwary and operates day and night as a manufactory of drunkards. The gambling hell and the brothel are its almost invariable accompaniments. Very often, also, it is a center of political power, part of that machine which sometimes under the name of one party and sometimes under the name of another fills the offices and controls the revenues of our municipalities. Always organized, always at work, without scruple, without honor, it counts for more in the election of mayors and aldermen than the intelligence, decency, and piety of the larger cities combined. Set up by the extrajudicial defiance of an express statute in our regular and volunteer armies, it is slaying more of our young men than the bullets of their enemies and ruining the characters and blasting the hopes

of thousands besides. We must put it down, or it will put us down. The abolition of this national evil cannot be effected by fanatical means. What is needed in opposing it is perfect sanity combined with undying determination. Let not those of us who are enlisted for the war fall into the inexcusable folly of denouncing and vilifying one another. Whoever is willing to help in any way ought to be welcomed as an ally, and not treated as an enemy simply because he cannot pronounce our shibboleths. We are all aiming at the same end. In some sections it may best be accomplished by one policy, and in others by another. I am warranted in saying that but for the horde of ignorant and purchasable voters who are sometimes corralled into droves of five hundred and marched to the polls like so many cattle the doggeries could be closed in every Southern State to-morrow. Even as it is, by far the larger part of our territory is already under some form of prohibition, and the battle goes bravely on.

(4) There is reason to fear that we are suffering from a serious decay in the purity of family life. The Christian doctrine that marriage is the union of one man and one woman for life, indissoluble except for the one cause that defeats its very end and design, is not held in such honor as it once was. The records of our divorce courts are a burning shame. Worst of all, it is not solely nor even chiefly among the lowly and the ignorant that the disregard for the sanctities of the marriage bond is found. Among the very richest of the land occurrences of recent years have disclosed a state of sexual morality that would scandalize a Hottentot and put an Australian Bushman to the blush.

Vice is none the less hideous when it arrays itself in purple and fine linen, feeds on crystallized violets, and seeks to redeem its loathesomeness by the charm of accomplished manners. We must guard our homes. Blessed be God for the thousand sweet and beautiful households in crowded cities and quiet villages and remote country places, watched over by the holy angels of peace and love, and into which the base satanic notions of this wicked world find no entrance!

(5) It must be allowed that many indications show an increasing lack of respect for law and order. The strong often defy it and trample it under foot with contemptuous indifference, and the weak evade its obligations by all sorts of cunning schemes. This tendency must be corrected, else we shall presently feel the very foundations rocking and swaying beneath us. That awful enormity, the mob, is only a symptom. Though sometimes it may be the uprising of an outraged community, yet usually it is the self-assertion of lewd fellows of the baser sort. Under no circumstances can it be defended, justified, or tolerated. Society goes to pieces in the very day in which courts and juries become too corrupt or too feeble to administer justice or surrender their functions into the hands of the rabble. A clarified public opinion, rising up in its might, must demand that the judiciary and the executive branches of the government exercise their authority with such impartiality, fairness, uprightness, and courage as to take away the last excuse for irregular and illegal methods of punishment. The broad shield of the law must be thrown over the property and person of every citizen in the land, from the

humblest negro that plows his blind mule in the Black Belt of Alabama to the proudest millionaire that rides in his automobile down Michigan Avenue; and from every class, too, there must be exacted that unquestioning and absolute obedience which the dictates of common sense and the higher motives of patriotism alike require.

(6) But our chief danger, after all, is to be looked for not outside but inside the Churches. I am not going to indulge in railing accusations, nor to intimate that organized Christianity throughout the world is in a condition of total or partial apostasy from Jesus Christ, for I do not believe any such thing to be the case. Since the day when the Lord of glory, "who liveth, and was dead, and behold he is alive for evermore," ascended to the height of his mediatorial throne, there has never been a time when a larger percentage of his disciples diligently endeavored to adjust their lives to the pattern presented in his teaching than now. The world contains a multitude of faithful souls which no man can number and who walk before God in unspotted garments. But there is also, as there has ever been, an immense company of merely nominal Christians who have only a name to live while they are really dead. To thrust them forth from the Church is to give them over finally to the devil. We must care for them as well as we can, bearing with them as long as they do not fall into flagrant sins, and even then exercising discipline with that tender charity which "hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things, and thinketh no evil." It is true that they add little or nothing to our fighting strength, and sometimes they

are a positive hindrance to great achievements. What shall we do? There is only one answer. By all possible means we must stimulate and quicken the general life of the Church till every individual member shall feel its vibrant pulsations. There is no magical way of curing the prevailing ills. Ecclesiastical enactments cannot do it. Worldliness is subtle, elusive, persistent. It laughs at the most stringent statutes that are framed to suppress it and slips like an invisible spirit through the finest meshes of prohibitory legislation. Our only resource is to fall back upon the simple directions of the gospel. What we need is a return to the old paths, to the devouter study of the Scriptures, to the habit of intense and fervent private prayer, to the observance of family worship, to a more diligent attendance upon all public means.

III.

A MESSAGE TO THE MOTHER CHURCH OF METHODISM.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

A MESSAGE TO THE MOTHER CHURCH OF METHODISM.

[Fraternal address delivered before the British Wesleyan Conference, Sheffield, England, 1903.]

Mr. President, Venerable Fathers of the Platform, and Brethren of the Conference: The reading of my credentials, to which you have just listened, makes it almost unnecessary for me to say that I am come to you as the official bearer of fraternal salutations from the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. But I cannot forbear to add that I count it a distinguished honor to have been sent on such an errand, and that I am deeply regretful of my inability to discharge its obligations in a thoroughly becoming manner. Nevertheless I draw much comfort from the settled conviction that I am in the house of my friends, and that I may safely look for a lenient and generous judgment at your hands upon whatever defects may appear either in the substance of my message or in the form of its utterance. Reënforced by this conviction, I shall venture to speak without reserve the things that are in my heart. Bred as I was among a people who hold to the creed that sincerity is the first element in all true manhood, I should be ashamed to go back and face the great constituency that has commissioned me hither if I could so far forget myself as to be otherwise than frank and open in your presence.

It is barely possible that in trying to be explicit I

shall fall into collision with some of your prejudices and prepossessions. Nothing is farther from my wishes, however, than a catastrophe of that sort. For a vague and shadowy rumor which may have no basis in reality has reached my ears to the effect that it is not altogether safe to stir up the latent belligerency of your natures. And even if the shadow of this apprehension were not upon me, I am still committed to the doctrine that gentle courtesy consorts well with outspoken candor, and that it is not at all necessary to be rude in order to be honest.

It is my first duty, Mr. President, and not my least pleasant one, to thank you for the men of light and leading whom you have from time to time sent to our General Conference. The last of these, Rev. F. L. Wiseman, was present with us at Dallas, Tex., two years ago. No man more alert in mind, more facile in speech, and more genial in manner has ever stood upon our platform. He came and saw and conquered. If he did not bring off as booty everything that was in sight, it was simply because he was too magnanimous to take advantage of his opportunity. He certainly brought our respect, our admiration, and our brotherly love. The worthy gentlemen who preceded him have both been since elected to the presidency of this Conference, and we take it for granted that he too is set down, if not in the book of fate, at least in the unpublished Agenda, to go the same way. Our next General Conference, Mr. President, is to meet in May, 1906, at Birmingham, Ala., in the heart of the coal and iron industries of the South and in the midst of an intelligent and progressive Methodist population. We shall

hope to receive from you at that time a representative of like quality with those that have gone before. Without the slightest hesitancy I feel authorized to promise him in this public way a reception quite warm enough to meet his most sanguine expectations. The thermometer will probably stand at about ninety degrees Fahrenheit, and the temperature of our hearts will register an equal level.

And now, Mr. President, as a sort of prophylactic against possible misapprehensions, let me state in the most definite possible terms that from my heart's core out to my finger tips and in every fiber of my being I am an American, loving with a passionate affection every foot of soil in the great republic, and reverencing more than any poor words of mine can possibly express the starry flag which is the outward and visible symbol of its authority. At the same time, seeing that I am from the South and that I belong to a Church which unhesitatingly publishes in its very name the geographical sphere of its operations, I shall offer no apology for confining myself chiefly to the discussion of affairs in that particular part of the United States.

Am I wrong in supposing that your judgment in regard to the South has been made up in large part on the testimony of those who, to put it mildly, held no brief in our behalf? At any rate, as it appears to us, the majority of those who have spoken and written about us have hardly set us in a fair light before the world. That we are a little sensitive in regard to our reputation is no doubt true, and it can scarcely be considered a fault that we cherish a just regard for the opinions of mankind. To give a concrete example of

what I mean, let me say that not a great while ago I reread, after seeing it indorsed in the stately columns of the *Spectator* as of unimpeachable authority, Prof. Goldwin Smith's "History of the United States." But this second reading served only to fortify the conclusion which I had reached about the book some years ago—namely, that, though written in exasperatingly good English, it is as perfect a mixture of crude ignorance and Pharisaical malignity as the literature of our common tongue can show. What Professor Smith has to say about the South may be summed up in a single sentence something like this: That but for its political connection with the more intelligent and progressive North, it would long ago have drifted back into a state of fossilized semibarbarism. "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" To this test and adjudication we are willing to submit without a murmur. Professor Smith himself was never in the South. He is not, therefore, in a position to speak from personal observation. But the record of the facts is writ large in the life of the nation, and so is open to the inspection of all honest and fair-minded students. If anything in human annals is susceptible of proof, it is this: that the men of the South, from the beginning of the colonial days down to the present time, have contributed their full share to the prosperity and the glory of their country.

From the South came George Washington, *pater patriae,* whom the *Methodist Times* insists on classing with the Puritans, but who was really a Cavalier in every drop of his blood, a sort of transfigured and

glorified English country gentleman whose nature had been broadened by the ample spaces and the liberal atmosphere of the New World, of whom John Richard Green truly says that "no nobler figure ever stood in the forefront of a nation's life," and who was so unassailably great that not even gruff old Thomas Carlyle, *advocatus diaboli* as he was, could fulfill his promise to "take George down a peg or two;" Patrick Henry, the supreme orator of the Revolutionary era, not an ignorant and briefless barrister as prejudice has painted him, but a diligent reader of great books and a thinker who grappled the law and the reasons of it with the unrelaxing vigor of a giant; Thomas Jefferson, the author at thirty-three of the Declaration of Independence, and later of the Statute for Religious Freedom in the State of Virginia, and by far the most erudite and versatile of all our Presidents; James Madison, "the father of the Constitution," a publicist whose knowledge ranged broadly and deeply over the whole field of history; John Marshall, the great Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who dwarfs all his successors in comparison, and by whom more than by any other one man the written Constitution was converted from a tentative theory into an actual working plan of government; Andrew Jackson, son of a Carrickfergus immigrant, whose brilliant victory at New Orleans on January 8, 1815, almost the only substantial land victory that we gained in that miserable war, made it certain that thereafter nobody would venture in times of peace to search an American ship on the high seas; and in later years, when unhappy civil discords issued in a gigantic war between the States, Robert E. Lee

and Stonewall Jackson, those Christian knights without fear and without reproach, who may be held up in the face of all the world with the deliberate challenge to produce their like. Quite recently I have gone through the autobiography of Field Marshal Lord Garnet Wolseley, who as a young British officer spent some weeks in 1862 in General Lee's camp. Speaking of General Lee, he says:

> He was the ablest general and, to me, seemed the greatest man that I ever conversed with; and yet I have had the privilege of meeting Von Moltke and Prince Bismarck, and upon one occasion had a very long and interesting conversation with the latter. General Lee was one of the few men that ever seriously impressed and awed me with their natural, their inherent greatness. His greatness made me humble, and I never felt my own individual insignificance more keenly than in his presence. He was indeed a beautiful character, and of him it might truthfully be written, "In righteousness he did judge and make war."

Of Stonewall Jackson, General Wolseley adds:

> What a hero! And yet how simple, how humble-minded a man! In manner he was different from General Lee, and I can class him with no man that I have ever met or read of in history. Like the great commander whom he served with such knightly loyalty, he was deeply religious, but more austere, more Puritan in type. Both were great soldiers, yet neither had any Gothlike delight in war.

These succinct and comprehensive eulogies are elaborated at great length by the late Colonel Henderson, of your army, in his judicious, painstaking, and careful work on "Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War." Even Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, does not hesitate to affirm that

"General Lee was unquestionably the greatest of all the great soldiers that have been produced by our English-speaking race, and this in spite of the fact that his last and greatest antagonist, General Grant, may himself claim to rank with Marlborough and Wellington." These men and a multitude like them who of acknowledged right sat in the seats of the mighty did not come by accident. On the contrary, they grew by normal processes out of the social, civil, and religious conditions in which they were born; and they were fairly representative and exponential of the people to whom they belonged—a people not without serious and regrettable faults and failings, yet fit on the whole to claim kinship with their English-speaking brethren in every part of the globe; conservative in all their instincts and convinced that true and permanent progress must come, not by cataclysmal fits and starts, but by that slow and orderly evolution of society in which liberty "broadens down from precedent to precedent;" caring little for great wealth and nothing at all for the vulgar and ostentatious luxury that goes along with it, but aiming at homely comfort and finding intense delight in the possession and enjoyment of competent means; free from the hypocrisy of a merely formal politeness on the one hand and from unsocial incivility on the other; not particularly solicitous to enlarge the range of their close acquaintance, but still gracious to all strangers; maintaining a kindly and tolerant attitude toward their dependents, a self-respecting but courteous deportment toward their equals, and more than a little skeptical as to the existence of any class anywhere that might rightfully claim to be their su-

periors; loving their own homes and families with a passionate devotion, keenly sensitive as to the sacredness of the blood bond between themselves and their closer or more distant kinsmen, and patriotically attached to their whole country; holding their heads erect and unafraid in the presence of men, spontaneously deferential to women, and bowing with an unquestioning faith before the Majesty of the Eternal. Such, in brief, they were; and such, despite the transforming influences of these commercial days, they still are in the warp and woof of their being.

> "With ardent hearts and ever-open hands,
> Candid and honest, brave and proud they grew,
> Their lives and habits colored by fair hands,
> As clouds give waters hue."

May I quote once more and this time from Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, one of the cleanest and ablest of our modern statesmen? He says:

> My life, politically and personally, has been a life of almost constant strife with the leaders of the Southern people, yet as I grow older I have learned not only to respect and esteem but to love the great qualities which belong to my fellow citizens of the Southern States. They are a noble race. We may well pattern from them in some of the great virtues which make up the strength as they make the glory of free States. Their love of home, their chivalrous respect for woman, their courage, their delicate sense of honor, their constancy, which can abide by an opinion or a purpose or an interest of their States through adversity and through the years and through the generations, are things from which the people of the more material North may take a lesson. And there is another thing: covetousness, corruption, the low temptation of money has not yet found any place in your Southern politics.

It was in such a soil as this, Mr. President, that Methodism had its original and most congenial home in America. Even were it true—and I do not believe it to be true—that the first New World congregation of Methodists was organized in John Street, New York, the undeniable fact remains that Maryland and Virginia soon became the strongholds and the radiating centers of its power. The first American bishop, William McKendree, was a Virginian who had been an officer in the Revolutionary army and had the militant temper in his blood, a good soldier of Jesus Christ, possessing all the holy fervor and untiring zeal of Francis Asbury, with a natural breadth of view and a faculty of constructive ecclesiastical statesmanship which Asbury did not possess. Most of the bishops and a full proportion of the leaders and preachers of that period came from the same quarter. In the undivided American Methodism the South always furnished a due share of the intellectual and spiritual force and did an honorable part of the work.

Our itinerants, obedient to the law which sent them, not where they most preferred to go, but where they were most needed, virtually covered the whole land and reached all classes of society from the highest to the lowest. The majority of them in the beginning were men of limited culture, and not a few made sad havoc of the King's English. But there were many who in the face of the gravest difficulties became sound scholars, able expositors of the Word of God, and convincing and persuasive preachers; and now and then a man arose among them with that gift of splendid eloquence, that commanding and victorious speech

which in every country and in every age fails not to catch the ears and charm the hearts of the multitude. At one end of the line governors, senators, congressmen, judges, lawyers, physicians, merchants, and planters heard the call of the gospel by the lips of these consecrated evangelists and heeded it, and at the other end the poorest and lowliest of the settlers in their log cabins and the masses of the negro slaves in the cotton fields and the rice swamps were led in triumph by them as captives of Christ. The result is that throughout the great stretch of territory below the Ohio and the Potomac Methodism is to-day the dominant type of religion. In my native State of Tennessee there are more Methodists than there are members of any other denomination, Romanist or Protestant. Our latest and best historian in a well-considered chapter affirms that the Methodist circuit riders actually created the civilization of the State. You will be pleased to learn, I am sure, that in Georgia, the colony of Oglethorpe and Wesley and the last of the original thirteen, there is scarcely a city, town, village, or country community without an effective Methodist organization. And even in far-off Texas, yet scarcely sixty years a member of the Federal Union, there are approximately 250,000 communicants in our Churches. In the mountains of North Carolina and Kentucky, in the swamps of Arkansas and Louisiana, on the fertile prairies of Missouri, and on the treeless plains of New Mexico and Arizona—go where you will, you will find them singing the Wesleyan hymns and bearing glad testimony to the blessed experience of salvation from sin. And how strangely uniform that testimony

is! The sweet undertone of it is the same beneath all skies.

Of the infinite toil and sacrifice by which these achievements have been secured, I have little time to give details. You know what it costs to spread the kingdom of God anywhere, and especially under the difficult and exacting conditions that exist in a new country and among a restless, energetic, and self-willed people. The men who did it in America, though their names be not blazoned by any historian, nor commemorated by any orator, nor sung by any poet, nor carved in marble by any sculptor, are entitled to be reckoned among the true heroes of the world—"the messengers of the Churches and the glory of Christ." I speak the truth before God and lie not when I maintain that there is no chapter in the records of the universal Church that more fitly deserves to be written in illuminated letters than that one which tells how our missionaries, not by the use of secular or sensational methods, but by the proclamation of a pure and unadulterated gospel transformed hundreds of thousands of besotted African pagans into Christian men and women. The chief leader in this great movement was William Capers, of South Carolina, the first fraternal delegate from American Methodism to this Conference. Not by his own election, but by inexorable providence, he was himself a Christian master. Though born to wealth and social position, he was smitten with an infinite compassion, like that of the Christ himself, for the poor creatures whom the cupidity of English and Yankee men-stealers had brought to the shores of America. On the marble shaft which rises

above his grave in the capital of his native State is this brief inscription:

WILLIAM CAPERS,

BISHOP OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH,
FOUNDER OF THE MISSIONS TO THE SLAVES.

When the Civil War began we had hundreds of picked men devoting themselves exclusively to the task of evangelizing their colored brethren, to say nothing of the still larger number who were giving a part of their time and effort to the same work. They conscientiously believed that they could draw no warrant from the New Testament for stirring up a servile insurrection, and they were altogether certain that they had no commission to foment a crusade of reformation by assassination; but with a fidelity that never wavered, though it was hindered by many obstacles and exposed to many sneers, and moving on the exact lines laid down by Richard Watson in his famous letter of instructions to your own West Indian missionaries, they did vindicate the quality of their motives by bringing uncounted thousands to the knowledge of God. At the date which I have just mentioned we had 207,000 communicants of African blood, besides a host of probationers and Sunday school scholars, the largest and, I undertake to maintain, the best body of converted heathen in all the world, though our Baptist brethren were little behind us in the zeal and success of their labors. Against all the allegations of unfaithfulness to our trust which an ignorant fanaticism has thrown in our faces I set these inexpugnable facts and figures and am content to let the case rest just there.

That we ought to have done better I shall not deny, and we are perfectly willing to be reminded of it by anybody that *has* done better.

Suffer me, Mr. President, to go a little farther with my chronicle. The War between the States, the most violent civil convulsion of modern times, ended in a sort of universal upheaval and dislocation. The South was defeated, impoverished beyond conception, and terribly humiliated, but still held an unexpended reserve of spirit which was to become the working capital of its future operations. Then came the horrors of reconstruction. The thing which Edmund Burke declared to be impossible was actually done: an indictment was framed against a whole people who, without being allowed to plead, were adjudged guilty and subjected to the most appalling penalties. The cruel and fatuous experiment was tried of putting a race that had more than a millennium of English history in its blood under the domination of a race whose great-grandfathers were Congo savages. Taxation rose to the limit of confiscation. The carpetbagger and the scalawag went to the chief places of power, and there followed a carnival of colossal stealing. Unable for a time to help ourselves, we had no course left us but to endure the infliction in dumb and patient —perhaps I ought to call it impatient—agony.

But while other leadership failed or stood in doubt the Church rallied to her standards. One-third of her total membership was gone, the best of it buried on the battle field, and the remainder drifted away from the anchorage of the faith. The colored people, intoxicated, as was natural, by their new freedom and played

upon by emissaries from without, deserted us within a year to the number of 150,000, either setting up for themselves or else going where there was the promise if not the potency of abundant loaves and fishes. It was openly and exultantly published in certain religious newspapers that we were ecclesiastically dead, and next of kin were not lacking with an eager appetite for administering upon our shrunken estate. Prophets of evil said that we should never be able to got another General Conference together, and then laid themselves out to secure the fulfillment of their own prediction. When the Conference of 1866 did meet, it gathered from a desolate land and from Churches every one of which was filled with widows and orphaned children. It really looked as if the end had come. But there were men at the helm who believed in God and were not afraid. They counted up their numbers, a bare 450,000, and then, unrestrained by any superstition as to a fixed and divinely authoritative theory of ecclesiastical government, they resolutely set to work and readjusted the machinery to suit the changed conditions that had been thrust upon them.

To make a long story short, what has been the outcome of their courage? The General Minutes for the current year may answer that question. The total number of our communicating members, including the traveling and local ministers, is 1,566,828, a gain for the year of 31,766, and for the period since 1866 of over 1,100,000, or nearly 300 per cent inside of a single generation. These are gathered into 47 Annual Conferences, 295 districts, 5,208 pastoral charges, and 18,561 separate societies or congregations. The total

number of traveling preachers is 6,220, an increase for the year of 151, and of local preachers 4,806, a decrease of 10. The total number of Sunday school scholars and teachers is 1,088,896, an increase of 45,285. The total number of Epworth Leaguers is 123,325, an increase of 6,746. We have 15,090 houses of worship valued at $26,604,777, an increase in value of $1,401,744; 4,453 parsonages valued at $4,598,356, an increase of $455,798. The total amount paid to ministers of all classes was $3,107,689, an increase of $108,237.13. The total amount raised for missions and Church extension, in regard to which I am happy to inform you that we are feeling the definite thrill and enthusiasm of a new interest, was $799,313.94, an increase of $84,083.95. The total amount raised for superannuated preachers was $192,029.31, an increase of $14,821.24. The educational statistics I am not able to present in detail; but I am prepared to say that our schools and colleges, though much hampered and restricted by their lack of adequate equipment and endowment, are doing more satisfactory work than ever before. One result of our Twentieth Century Movement was the securing of subscriptions to the amount of nearly $2,000,000 for strengthening this arm of service.

Rightly or wrongly, all elementary education in America has been taken over by the several States and is becoming more and more purely secular in character. The States are also making an effort to monopolize the higher forms of intellectual training. In many of the State universities the faculties are made up largely of noble Christian scholars and a

genuine Christian temper prevails. In others there is an attitude of easy indifference or of open contempt for religion. It is becoming quite customary to sneer at the little Church colleges as "preacher factories." As acute a student of our institutions, however, as Mr. Bryce bears ungrudging testimony to the fact that they have had much to do in toning up the intelligence and the morals of the communities in which they are situated. We do not mean to abandon them. On the contrary, it is our fixed purpose to strengthen them in every possible way. Leaving all other considerations out of view, they have a large and definite value as feeders of our ministry. While they cannot compete with the great universities in offering the broadest scholastic opportunities, they do afford good facilities for fundamental training. We are so far from being ashamed of them that we point to them as our jewels.

Among the many other schemes that we now have on hand is one to raise $5,000,000 as a permanent endowment fund to supplement the various Conference endowments and the annual collections for the superannuate preachers and their widows and orphans. A fine beginning has already been made, and we feel entirely confident of securing in due time the entire sum.

Our Publishing House is doing well, sending out millions of copies of its various periodical publications and issuing and circulating many valuable books. During the coming year the Agents will erect new buildings at a cost of at least $150,000.

I am glad to say that we are on good terms with

nearly all other Christian communities—with all, in fact, that are willing to be on good terms with us—and that our relations are especially pleasant with our sister Episcopal Methodism in the Northern States, which is, past all dispute, one of the most potent forces for righteousness in the Protestant world, and for the continued welfare of which we pray with devout hearts. A scheme for federation with this body, looking to the abatement and removal of all unseemly rivalries and jealousies and to cordial coöperation in matters of common interest, was inaugurated by our General Conference ten years ago and is now beginning to bear fruit. One of its best consequences is the preparation of a joint hymnal, catechism, and order of worship for at least 5,000,000 American Methodists.

The question of organic union comes up once in a while, but it has not yet advanced beyond the academic stage. Whether it would be wise to attempt to bring so large a number of Christian people, living in so vast a territory, under the absolute legislative control of one General Conference, may be safely doubted. It is quite possible to confuse a mere lust for ecclesiastical empire with zeal for the kingdom of God. A centralized ecumenical Church, grown fat and proud of its enormous bulk, is in perfect harmony with the traditions and tendencies of Romanism, but utterly out of tune with all the true conceptions of Protestantism. But the essential unity of believers, the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, must be emphasized and cultivated. Since the Shepherd is one, the flock is likewise one; and this is none the less the case because of its being housed in many separate folds.

I have been asked more than once, Mr. President, how it is that in a democratic country we have adopted a strong episcopacy. My answer to that question is that it is just exactly our extreme democracy which has rendered episcopacy expedient among us. As a matter of course, we scout the very thought of resting it on divine right, except in so far as we believe that inside the limitations of New Testament principles every Church has the inalienable divine right to frame its own form of government to suit its own necessities. We rejoice, Mr. President, in the proven truth that Methodism, being essentially a religion of the Spirit, is able to retain its vigor under any form—"lest one good custom should corrupt the world." You may depend upon it, moreover, that if our bishops should in the general opinion cease to administer their office with wisdom, unselfishness, and gentle strength, we should soon get rid of them, not by anarchic and revolutionary measures, but in an orderly and constitutional manner.

A counterpoise to this particular feature of our Church polity is the increasing influence of laymen in all our councils. They sit in equal numbers with the ministers in the General Conference and vote on all questions. In the Annual Conferences, which with us have no legislative authority but are purely administrative in character, they are represented by four delegates from each district (one of whom may be a local preacher), and they participate without restriction in all the proceedings, except—a very important exception—such as affect ministerial character.

I need not tell you how strong is our antipathy to

everything like successionalism or sacerdotalism. We are believers in the historical continuity of the Church of God—the continuity of thought and life. But we reject, root and branch, the notion of tactual succession and thank God from the bottom of our hearts that we are not in it. The true succession is in sound doctrine and holy living. "The Church is where the Christians are"—and it is nowhere else.

With all the forms of sacramentalism we are almost impatient. The advocates of it tell us with an air of superior learning that "priest is only presbyter writ short," a fact which we might be presumed to know. But by a piece of juggling that can scarcely be called honest they forthwith proceed to thrust into the word the meaning of ἱερεὺς and *sacerdos,* and seem a little surprised and hurt that we insist on taking cognizance of the trick. While reverencing the two simple sacramental badges of the faith, we maintain that the free spirit whose movements are as unfettered as those of the viewless wind is not tied to them and, indeed, does often work apart from them. We rejoice with St. Paul that we are sent "not to baptize," not to make baptism or any other rite or ceremony our chief concern, "but to preach the gospel." The epithet of "preaching institute" which Isaac Taylor fixed upon Methodism so long ago we wear as a badge of honor.

And what a version of the gospel it is that we hold in trust! How small is the modification that it is necessary for us to make, even in the outward form of Wesleyanism, to render it adaptable to the needs of the present day! As our Bishop Paine used to say: "We have less to take back than any of them." We

carry no burden of closet theology that needs to be explained by being explained away and that calls for apology in the minds of plain people. The marrow and substance of our message at once commends itself to the common sense of the world. Let us stick to it.

I would, Mr. President, that I might stop just here. But I am forced to concede that, in spite of our abundant prosperity, we have much to disturb and distress us. The atmosphere is increasingly impregnated with the germs of doubt. A feeling of uncertainty has taken possession of the minds of a great many people, and they are raising the question as to whether, after all, we have not been building on the sand instead of on the rock. Very often they are not enemies of Christianity, but simply weak believers without that heroic strain in their faith which has our Lord's promise of special blessing.

Among other causes which have wrought to produce this state of affairs is the general dissemination of the views advanced by the higher critics of the Holy Scriptures. A thoughtful scholar may accept for himself most of these views without at all surrendering his established Christian convictions. The law of charity forbids me to think otherwise. But the masses of the people, when they are told that they must no longer regard the Bible as being the Word of God but as simply containing the Word of God in solution with many purely human elements, are naturally staggered and unsettled. "What, then, are we to do?" they ask. "Who shall help us to discriminate what is divine and authoritative from what is human and without binding

force on the intellect and the conscience?" The minister who can make light of a question like this, carrying as it often does a burden of tearful agony, has the heart of a fiend in him.

Of course we cannot suppress investigation. We are Protestants and not Romanists. "Light and more light" is our watchword. Whatever is proved true we are bound to accept, no matter how much the effort may cost us. But let us not be rash. There is a good deal of foolery mixed up with this higher criticism. The leader who gets too far ahead of the procession ceases to be a leader and becomes a solitary individual going his own gait. There is no want which the Church just now feels more keenly than the want of a sufficient number of profound, well-balanced, and devout scholars without even a trace of the pride of learning and with a keen and solemn sense of their responsibility to God, who shall be able to find safe and solid marching ground for those of us whose duties lie in the sphere of active labor rather than in the pursuit of exact and minute learning. Personally, I feel no trepidation as to the final issue. The things which cannot be shaken will remain as a heritage to our children and our children's children. But I am gravely concerned to arrest, if it may be, the disintegrating effect of the new and often more than doubtful teaching upon the present generation.

This attitude of mental indecision concerning which I have spoken is accompanied, as we might naturally expect, by an increasing spirit of worldliness. And who shall define this spirit? Subtle, elusive, persistent, it laughs at the impotent endeavors of prohibitive leg-

islation, and slips through the meshes of the carefulest statutes that are framed to restrain it. In the presence of it the higher and finer graces all wither away and die. The outward decency which it often maintains only makes it the more dangerous. When it puts on purple and fine linen and fares sumptuously every day, what rude prophet of the Lord shall dare to call it in question? The manifestations of worldliness are many. In the large cities, and slowly also in our towns and country places, there is a growing disregard of the Lord's day. The blessed and holy Sabbath which I knew as a boy, when a hush and stillness like that of eternity came over the whole community, is largely gone, and in its place there has come in too many instances a day of strenuous pleasure-seeking, of empty and idle amusement. It needs no prophet to forecast the damage which we are sure to suffer from this charge. There is an increasingly eager struggle for wealth. The South, which has been tested in every other way, is to be tested again at this point. We survived the loss of $4,000,000,000 worth of property in 1861-65 and the almost complete stagnation of the ten years that followed without serious hurt to our character. Whether we shall be able to stand the renewed prosperity that comes from cotton crops worth more than half a billion a year, to say nothing of our other immense gains, is an open question. The sanctity of family life among us is also in peril, less perhaps in the South than elsewhere, but enough so to fill us with the deepest concern. The facility for divorce and the frequency of its practice causes us to blush. Among some of our richer folk there is a laxity

of view and of conduct in this regard that would disgrace a Hottentot or a Digger Indian.

The liquor business with us is wholly and irredeemably bad. In addition to its other iniquities, which are enough to brand it before God and men, it goes into politics, controls municipal nominations and elections, and becomes an organized agency of public corruption. Our attitude as a Church toward it is one of open, unqualified, and eternal opposition. In the South, because of its relations to race troubles as well as for other reasons, we have had to take it by the throat. In the State of Mississippi, for example, and very largely through the influence of our Bishop Galloway, it has been driven from over sixty of the seventy counties. The same general policy, *mutatis mutandis,* prevails all the way from Virginia to Texas.

The race question is a living issue with us in more forms than one. Though the dominant strain of our blood is English, we are yet a sort of hodgepodge of nationalities. Our power of assimilation has been immense. In the past most of the immigrants have been of a kind that we could easily digest and incorporate—English, French, Germans, Scandinavians, and Irish. In these days we are getting more than half a million yearly, chiefly Neapolitans, Hungarians, Bohemians, and Poles—a fact which gives us thought and pause. The negro problem confronts us throughout the South. Concerning it I shall make a few remarks.

1. Ninety-five per cent of the negroes are living on terms of absolute friendship with their white neighbors, and are earning a better living by their daily labor than is enjoyed by any other peasantry in the world.

You cannot find one among the 10,000,000 of them but would turn up his nose—a difficult task—at the wages offered to the imported mine workers in South Africa.

2. The impoverished white South has taxed itself to the extent of $150,000,000 to provide schools for the negro children. Not one of them all is debarred from acquiring an elementary education.

3. Very slowly, yet, as I believe, quite steadily, the race is making progress. It is not the equal of the white race either in intellectual force or in moral capacity; and it never will be, for God has not built the universe on a dead level. Not uniformity but variety is the law of his working. Yet individual negroes show themselves worthy of all honor, and the great body of them may advance indefinitely in many ways.

4. The two races will remain distinct and separate, more so, and not less so, as the years go by. It is the universal opinion of those who have studied the whole subject most thoroughly that anything which directly or remotely leads to the production of a mongrel breed puts in peril the best interests of both races.

5. I have said that ninety-five per cent of the negroes are doing well, and I stick to it. But there is a remnant of untamed tropical savages among them, and they make the trouble and furnish the pretext for those irregular and lawless acts of retaliatory vengeance which are a standing reproach to our civilization.

What the udtimate result is to be, I know not. Nor is the man alive who can make a satisfactory forecast. In spite of all our difficulties and dangers we are full of hope. We are living in a better world than our

fathers occupied, and we trust to make it better still for our children. Our faith in a living God who is still on the throne renders it impossible for us to be pessimists. Not till we became atheists shall we lose heart. Animated by the recollection of his help in all the crises and emergencies of the past, and sustained and cheered by the miracles of his grace in the present, we shall lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes for the future. Thinking always larger thought of him, setting higher standards of character and conduct for ourselves, seeing visions and dreaming dreams of the universal spread and sway of his kingdom in the earth, we shall move right on in our work with fervent prayers ever rising from our hearts and jubilant songs, louder and sweeter than the sound of many waters, breaking from our lips.

IV.

THE RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER.

"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." (Matt. x. 27.)

THE RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER.

[Address delivered before the Ecumenical Conference of 1891, at Washington, D. C.]

Mr. President: When Dr. Edward A. Freeman, the historian of the Norman Conquest, was appointed to the Chair of Modern Languages in Oxford University, he found himself, so he tells us, greatly puzzled to determine the exact limits of the province that had been assigned him. The best authorities, moreover, gave him scant assistance in reaching a satisfactory conclusion. Baron Bunsen, for example, contended that modern history really began with the call of Abraham. Another eminent scholar stoutly insisted on drawing the line at the outbreak of the French Revolution. After much thought, Dr. Freeman professed a readiness to compromise between these extreme views by accepting the first Olympiad as the proper starting point. As a matter of fact, he entered the stream of events at a point about twelve hundred years lower down.

Saving the gracious presence of the Program Committee, may I not say that the topic which is now up for discussion is equally indefinite in character? The religious press by itself offers a wide field for consideration. When we add to this the religious uses of the secular press, we have staked off more ground than we can possibly occupy in the brief limits allowed. In view of these things, I take it for granted that the Program Committee had it in mind that each speaker,

instead of adhering strictly to the lines laid down by the essayist, should be at liberty to dwell upon any such aspect of the general subject as might commend itself to his taste or judgment. The particular topic, therefore, on which I shall speak is "The Religious Newspaper." If I barely touch the various points which I bring forward, you may understand that it is because the time will not allow me to do more.

That Methodism has never been indifferent to the religious newspaper needs no proof. If proof were needed, it could be commanded in abundance. Should I call the roll of the men that in the past have been assigned by it to editorial work, you would no doubt be startled. Pardon me if I confine myself here to my own Church. Of the *Christian Advocate,* with which I have the honor to be connected, the following gentlemen have been editors: John Newland Maffit, Irishman and orator (two words, Mr. President, for one thing); Thomas Stringfield, whose militant temper made him a brave soldier under Andrew Jackson at the age of sixteen, and who spent the larger part of his ministerial life in smiting, hip and thigh, the various forms of Calvinism; John Berry McFerrin, a genuine product of the Scotch-Irishry, the great tribune of our American Church, who stood squarely against all the enemies of Methodism and of *his* Methodism, but the dream of whose closing years and the prayer of whose dying hours, as I know, were that all fraternal strifes might cease and all fraternal misunderstandings be perfectly adjusted; Holland Nimmons McTyeire, the greatest man, take him all in all, that I have ever known, whose career of ever-increasing power and use-

fulness contradicted the current maxim that extreme precocity means early decay, editor of the New Orleans *Advocate* at twenty-seven, of the Nashville *Advocate* at thirty-two, and bishop at forty-one, on whose granite tombstone is cut the simple inscription, "A leader of men, a lover of children"; Thomas O. Summers, as bluff and hearty an Englishman as ever set his face toward the New World, behind whose loud and genial bluster there lay the kindest of human hearts, an omnivorous reader of all sorts of books, knowing especially John Wesley's sermons and Charles Wesley's hymns by heart, and so extremely orthodox that Dr. Albert Taylor Bledsoe once charged him, though unjustly, with measuring all things in heaven and earth by Watson's "Institutes"; and Oscar Penn Fitzgerald, of whom I dare not say all the thoughts that are in my heart, but of whom I shall say this, that the exquisite delicacy of his literary touch is equaled only by the perfect brotherliness of his temper. Were I to go to the other of our papers, I should, of course, mention William Capers, scholar and gentleman, first fraternal delegate from America to British Methodism, whose fitting epitaph records the two facts that he was "a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and founder of the missions to the slaves"; William M. Wightman, courtly, cultivated, Christlike; Leroy M. Lee, the nephew of that Jesse Lee who once upon a time preached on Boston Common, and who could hit a tremendous blow and follow it up with a succession of others in the same place; Thomas E. Bond, Jr., the greater son of his great father, a man of science and man of letters, the most erudite, incisive, and resource-

ful of American Methodist editors; Linus Parker, a gift of New York to New Orleans, whose editorials were Addisonian essays in finish and elegance, and who modestly shunned notoriety as much as common men seek it; John C. Keener, who never said a stupid thing and never did a cowardly one; and John J. Lafferty, a true wizard of the ink horn and magician with words. I wish I could go farther in this direction, but I cannot.

The developments that have taken place in secular journalism in the last quarter of a century are indeed amazing. To accomplish what has been done, money has been spent like water and the best brain of the world has been called into use and service. That the religious newspaper, though it has also made very gratifying progress, has not kept an equal pace nor reached an equal degree of excellence is an unquestionable fact. It is still susceptible of vast improvement. To secure this improvement as rapidly as possible is the duty of all concerned. Every agency employed in the interest of the kingdom of Christ ought to be of the highest possible character. It was fit that the initial gifts which our Lord received after he "became incarnate for us men and for our salvation" should be "gold, frankincense, and myrrh." We must set up an ideal standard of excellence for the religious press, and require our publishers and editors to aim at reaching it. They will not at once succeed, but the effort to do so will have its due effect. Here, as in all departments of religious activity, the empirical method must be dropped, and into its place must be put a rational and controlling conception of the ends sought to be secured. This much premised, let me say;

1. That the religious newspaper must be under the control of the Church. There are some intelligent persons who assure us that what they are pleased to call an unmuzzled and independent press is a prime necessity of healthy ecclesiastical growth. This assumes that an official press is both muzzled and dependent. I could easily show the fallacy of such an assumption, but I choose to refute it by a concrete instance. If it were true, the official editors would simply echo one another in endless iteration; but it is recorded somewhere in the ancient history of the Methodist Episcopal Church that when a certain grave question in which the better three-fourths of our humanity were much concerned came up for settlement, Drs. Buckley and Warren and Smith ranged themselves definitely on one side and Drs. Moore and Edwards and Fry on the other. Without pausing longer I wish to say that every argument which can be used to show that the Church should exercise some sort of effective supervision over her pulpits can also be used to show that she should be able to lay her directing hand upon the press. Independent journalism is on the outside; it stands on its own merits. As a stimulus and gadfly it has its values; but decrying ecclesiastical machinery as it does, it has no right to use this machinery to promote its own private interests.

2. The religious newspaper ought not to be conducted "for revenue only," or chiefly, or at all. Whenever it comes to be considered as an instrument for money-making, either for an individual owner or for a company of stockholders or for a Church, it necessarily suffers some subtraction from its power for

good. I sincerely doubt whether it ought ever to be allowed to make more than just enough to pay its own way. Whatever profits may accrue from its publication should be speedily returned in the form of betterments. From this general statement two practical inferences are to be drawn.

First, there are probably not a dozen religious newspapers in the United States that have each an editorial staff fully equal to the highest demands. The miserable economy which grinds the life out of a few men by laying impossible tasks upon their shoulders in order that dividends may be large ought to cease. Hard-headed men of the world are not guilty of such folly, and the Church ought by this time to have learned wisdom enough to avoid it. Every editor in chief should be surrounded and supported by a full corps of competent assistants. Imagine one man from week to week writing leaders and paragraphs, summarizing the world's news, reviewing books and periodicals, answering queries, clipping the best things from his exchanges, reducing the bulk and improving the quality of swollen communications, editing obituaries, carrying on an extensive correspondence, rearing a family in the fear of God, and cultivating his personal piety! There is no man within the range of my acquaintance whose nervous, intellectual, and moral resources are equal to such an undertaking.

In the second place, and on the same line, the use of the columns of a religious newspaper for advertising purposes ought to be most scrupulously guarded. At this point I am happy to say that there has in recent years been a great change for the better. Whether the

change has resulted from an improved moral sensitiveness on the part of publishers or from the external pressure of public opinion, it would be difficult to tell. There is still no little room for improvement. What is more common than to see the columns of a Church journal loaded down with puffs of patent medicines which profess to be sovereign cures for all the ills that flesh is hear to, but which are, in fact, the veriest humbugs, and which must be known to the editors and publishers as such? How does it look when two pages front each other, one lauding the merits of a "consumption cure" and the other insisting with most unctuous entreaty upon the blessedness of the "higher life"? There is an ex-editor in this body who, when a five-thousand-dollar check was offered him for space in which to insert a standing advertisement of a commodity of doubtful quality, answered: "No; not if you would make it fifty thousand." Shall a mercenary cupidity be longer allowed to disgrace the cause of Christ at this point? Shall we, while preaching that godliness is gain, act upon the principle that gain is godliness? Has not the time fully come for repentance, for reformation, for amendment?

3. The religious newspaper ought not to be turned into a mere bulletin board for the recording of current events. True, inasmuch as it is a newspaper it must give a full and specific account of whatever important events are taking place in any part of the world; and inasmuch as the Christianity of which it is the exponent lays claim on every department of healthy secular life, it must not be indifferent to transactions of a political, commercial, scientific, or artistic character. But at the

same time it must sift and winnow the great mass of details, throw aside whatever is ephemeral in character, and publish only what is of general significance and permanent value. It need hardly be said that everything should be excluded that cannot go with perfect propriety into a Christian home. Sensational features are a blot upon even our "enterprising" secular journalism. In connection with our religious press they are not to be tolerated for one moment.

4. On the other hand, the religious newspaper is equally not a quarterly review. This fact limits its scope in one direction as much as the fact which we have just been considering does in another direction. It must be able to discuss even the greatest questions of science, philosophy, and religion, but in a brief and popular way. There are some excellent and intelligent people who do not believe that this is a possibility, but I am not of the number. Even the highest and most abstract themes can be presented in such a fashion as will make them apprehensible by the common mind. The technical language of the books and the schools can be translated into the ordinary speech of everyday life. The people of the nineteenth century will not read a long and elaborate article in a daily or weekly paper. Three columns of "Trichotomy," "to be continued in the next issue," will cut down the subscription list. In preparing the dishes which are to furnish forth our feasts, we must, within limits at least, consult the tastes of the guests that are to sit at our boards. It is not worth while to supply an abundance of food which we know they will not eat. The same general principle will condemn what is known as "the blanket

sheet," which is likely to be a mere hodgepodge or *omnium gatherum,* characterless and profitless. Not quantity but quality is the thing to be aimed at. An ounce of attar of roses is worth a hundred gallons of the scented waters of the ordinary drug store.

5. The religious journal is not a pulpit. This is a very widely spread delusion. Once in a while, under the influence of it, an eloquent and ambitious preacher seeks and finds an editorial post. No sooner is he safely fixed in his place than he lifts up his voice and begins to discourse as if he had an audience of ten thousand souls listening to him. After he has cut up a few dozen of his old sermons into longitudinal sections for editorial purposes, he is likely to find out his mistake. Somehow or other the people do not respond to him as they did when he stood before them in his own proper person. The sorry stuff which sounded well enough when set out with fine tricks of voice and manner becomes "stale, flat, and unprofitable" when committed to the faithful keeping of cold types. The habit of mind which is superinduced by preparation for the pulpit is essentially different from that which is required on the tripod. This is saying nothing against either the pulpit or the tripod, but only insisting that two valuable and important branches of religious service are distinct from each other in their methods, though they wholly agree as to their ultimate aims.

6. The religious newspaper goes its full length for all just reforms. It must be a leader of the Lord's hosts if it is to do its full work, not merely catching and reflecting a public opinion that already exists, but cre-

ating and guiding such opinion in all right directions. If this were the time and place, I could name manifold instances in which the denominational organs have led the way on great and grave issues. But the religious paper must be concerned also in regard to secular reforms. The editor that is silent in the face of the ravages of the liquor traffic ought to be cashiered. The same thing may be said of him who has nothing to say concerning that slimy octopus, the Louisiana Lottery. But there must be discrimination. The paper that shouts itself hoarse over every proposed change in social or political matters soon loses influence. There are reforms and reforms. There must, therefore, be a due proportion, no riding of hobbies, but a judicious and balanced interest in all human affairs. I wish especially to enter a protest against the delusion that a religious paper can best advance the interests of the kingdom of Christ by becoming the mouthpiece of any political party; nay, it would not be wise for it to do so even were that party formally to incorporate in its platform of principles the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer!

7. The religious newspaper, in brief, must be devout but not sanctimonious, courageous but not pugnacious, enterprising but not sensational, alert but not pert, literary but not pedantic—so bright and sweet and brave and strong and pure that the question of its circulation will be one requiring only smallest thought.

V.

THE NEW DEMANDS UPON METHODIST AUTHORSHIP.

"Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." (Matt. xiii. 52.)

THE NEW DEMANDS UPON METHODIST AUTHORSHIP.

[Address delivered before the Ecumenical Conference, London, 1901.]

Mr. President: I am asked by the Program Committee to set forth in ten short minutes what are the new demands on Methodist authorship. To accomplish this task in anything like a satisfactory manner is an evident impossibility. All that I can hope is to furnish a few bare suggestions. If these suggestions prove at all helpful in the way of stimulating thought and provoking discussion, I shall be abundantly satisfied. That Methodist ministers should have ever done anything valuable in the way of authorship is really a matter of wonder. The opportunities that they enjoy for bookmaking are scanty almost beyond belief. As soon as any man appears among us with a little more than common intellectual force he is put to such steady daily work that he has no leisure left for scholarly pursuits. It has been so from the beginning, and appears likely to be so to the end. The result is that those of our brethren who have achieved much in the field of letters have done so by a diligent use of snatched intervals between routine drudgeries. It is the implicit belief of the people called Methodists that there is no end to the working power of their ministers, and none to their versatility. What other Church would ever dream of transferring a man who has been only a busy and successful pastor to the business secretaryship of a Church

extension board? Or to the presidency of a classical or theological college? Or to the editorship of a great newspaper? Or to the command of the channel fleet? What other Church would expect him, in the midst of such multitudinous engagements, to write a treatise on the drift of scientific investigation or on the present aim and probable outcome of biblical criticism? I am not saying that the state of affairs concerning which I thus speak is wholly evil. As a matter of fact, it is not wholly evil. Out of it has come much good. The strenuous life which it demands is in many respects a spiritually healthy life. Nevertheless, it must be apparent to all observant minds that until the conditions are somewhat altered we cannot expect our communion to produce a great and fruitful literature. Provision must be made for the more elaborate and systematic training of our superior youth before they are called upon to assume the active responsibilities of their high vocation, and in some way or other a broader margin must be granted them for the prosecution of their studies after they have once been inducted into their office. If there is any master in Israel who can devise an effective plan for compassing these ends, he will be fairly entitled to a monument and will probably get it.

But while the *status quo* remains we must, nevertheless, make the most of it. The Church in every age is bound by all considerations to do its own thinking. To go on indefinitely accepting and repeating the formulæ of the fathers, as if they possessed some magical virtue and were quite too sacred to be touched or modified in any way, is to commit an act of supreme folly. Every-

body that has an outlook upon the course of history is aware of that inevitable process by which words that originally incarnate and represent a living truth have a natural tendency to harden and crystallize into the expression of a dead dogma. I have sometimes thought that if Mr. Wesley could only know the extent to which many of his followers have fallen into the habit of repeating the *ipsissima verba* of his teachings, as if they were a final and conclusive statement of the truth, he would turn over in his grave and groan; for he himself, far from being the slave of traditions, was the freest and boldest mind of his generation. He made diligent use of all available material from every source, but he called no man master and played the parrot to no school of critics or theologians. Holding fast the form of sound words does not mean the abdication of one's personal right to consider, to weigh, to sift, to reconstruct, to reject. The ultimate problems of religion are eternal. They are always emerging with fresh aspects and calling for a new hearing. It is impossible for us to appropriate the best products of former inquiry without vigorous original research. To grasp the full significance of any existing tenet it is necessary for us to know the circumstances under which it was first framed, and to put ourselves, as far as may be, into the mental atmosphere and attitude of the men who framed it. Is it too harsh a judgment to affirm that the greatest enemies of a conservative orthodoxy are those belated dogmatists who still cling with devout stupidity to the very letter of the creeds and symbols of other days? The Methodist who insists on measuring everything in heaven and earth by Watson's "Institutes" or

Wesley's Sermons is a pestilent breeder of heresy. And what shall I say of that one who, with the commentaries of Meyer and Godet and Lightfoot and Ellicott and Westcott and the noble volumes of our own Joseph Agar Beet in his hands or in his sight, still stoutly affirms that the dictum of Adam Clarke is the end of the law on a matter of exposition? We are living in the twentieth century; and unless we wish to incur the just suspicion of idiocy, we must gather and use all that is offered to us by the master workmen who are toiling with such infinite diligence in this end of the ages to find out whatever may be discovered concerning the mind and purpose of God toward our lost world.

What I have said might be said with a considerable measure of pertinency at any time and in any place. But at this time and in this place it deserves to receive a special emphasis. Two great movements, more or less related to each other, are passing over the world. The doctrine of evolution, which in spite of the materialistic and atheistic forms it sometimes assumes undoubtedly contains large elements of truth, is gaining an ever-wider acceptance; and the science of historical criticism, that is a science in spite of the arrogant and ignorant skepticism with which it is often propounded, is likewise commanding the attention and respect of scholars everywhere. These facts render it imperative that those who would speak to their fellow men in intelligible and understandable terms must discard much of the terminology with which they have long been familiar and clothe their message, if not in a new, at least in an altered dress. While we cannot too ear-

nestly insist upon the propriety of teaching the gospel in terms of the gospel, we shall be wise if we likewise remember that we must teach it in terms that come home to the business and the bosoms of the struggling, suffering, and sinning men and women who are thronging about us on every hand and crying out, though not always in articulate tones, for guidance and help. Let there be no craven fear that in following this course we shall get away from the New Testament or forfeit anything of that great inheritance which has been brought down to us from distant years.

I confess a deep personal regret that, owing partly to the circumstances which I have above mentioned and partly to a right and jealous regard for the honor of long-established and well-accredited truths, our Methodist ministers have not had a full share in the critical and theological discussions of recent times; and I sincerely trust that in the future we shall show ourselves as worthy and as competent to be heard in these fields as we have been in other spheres of life and thought. As a matter of course, we dare not forget that evangelism, the direct offer of salvation to the world, is our chief business. Bishop Galloway correctly put the case in the sermon that opened the proceedings of this body: "Our gospel is a proclamation and not a discussion, a verity and not a speculation." That high and pregnant sentiment doubtless finds an echo in all our hearts. But the fact remains that the intellect has its rights in religion, and that a living faith will always be courageous enough to confront without flinching every issue that may be raised and to probe to the core and center every distressing and

paralyzing doubt that may be thrust upon its notice. If our brightest young men show an inclination to explore untried territory, let us not warn them off with an ominous shake of the head and an intimation that they are treading on dangerous ground; but rather let us bid them Godspeed in their glorious adventure. There doubtless is occasion for speaking now and then a word of caution and moderation to them. Some of them may be puffed up with fleshly wisdom, and some may even go so fast and so far as to cast away the confidence that they have in Christ Jesus. But if they have the root of the matter in them, if by blessed experience they know God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, if they are steadied and strengthened by the assurance in themselves that they have passed from death unto life, then they are comparatively safe. After perhaps a little wavering they will plant their feet upon the solid rock and abide steadfast when the rains descend and the floods come and the winds blow upon them. In any event, while wrong thinking is perilous, not to think at all is absolutely fatal. I have taken it for granted that all mental activity of a religious sort will express itself, in a larger or smaller degree, in a written literature. If any one chooses to call in question this assumption, he is welcome to his opinion.

I have not now either the time or the inclination to contradict him. Were more space at my command, I should be glad to add something as to the ability and duty of Methodism to show its gifts in those forms of literature which are not distinctly religious in character, but which, nevertheless, contribute to the edifica-

tion and enrichment of the world's life. There is scarcely a branch of our widespread denomination that does not contain men capable of using their pens with fine effect in many directions. It is, for example, a cause for congratulation that a Methodist minister in one of the far-off colonies of Australia—I refer, of course, to Mr. W. H. Fitchett—should have brought forth so vivid a narrative of the way in which at the beginning of the century England saved Europe. Is it to be taken for granted that the spirit of minstrelsy is dead in us, and that we shall never have a great poet? And may we not expect that in due course of time some one shall come to glorify the romance of the itinerancy in a story that will make its appeal to the heart of mankind by its high and enduring worth? There is much in the history of Methodism for the past hundred years that lends itself most admirably to artistic treatment and narration. Shall we not look also for reviewers and essayists to arise? Are we doomed to everlasting barrenness in this respect? God forbid! In the meantime let our Publishing Houses keep a lookout for every sign of literary activity and give it their hearty encouragement.

VI.

AT THE GATHERING OF THE TRIBES.

"All the saints salute you." (2 Cor. xiii. 13.)

AT THE GATHERING OF THE TRIBES.

[Address of welcome at the Fourth Ecumenical Conference, Toronto, Canada, October, 1911.]

My Methodist Brethren from Beyond All Seas: The greetings that you have already received have been both so numerous and so cordial that it would surely be a great work of supererogation for me to add many words. But as the special representative of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with its nearly two million members, I must stand up and salute you.

There is at least one good reason why I should have been chosen to discharge this pleasant duty, for I am a man with lines of racial and ecclesiastical heredity reaching outward and backward into many lands. Of my four great-grandfathers, one was an unmixed German with the touch of Martin Luther on him, one was an unmixed Frenchman well drilled in the decrees of the Council of Trent and obedient to them, one was an unmixed Englishman and a most stubborn Baptist, and one was of mixed breed with the blood of Huguenot refugees and English churchmen flowing in equal currents through his veins. As for myself, I am a perfectly homogeneous product of all these mingled elements, an American from the top of my head to the soles of my feet, and a Methodist twenty-four hours out of every day from my heart's core to my finger tips. As such I greet you to-day.

You are welcome, brethren beloved, in the name of the Lord. We are devoutly thankful for the good

Providence that has been over you since you left your distant homes, and that has brought you safe over so many weary leagues of land and water to our great decennial gathering; and we earnestly pray that the same kindly Providence may be over the households and the Churches that you have left behind you.

It is our ardent hope that while we are here we may all "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" and get a fresh sense of what is meant by "the communion of saints." And why should there not come to us again and again during these days of Conference that blessed experience which came to John Wesley in Aldersgate Street on the evening of May 24, 1738, enabling him to say: "I felt my heart strangely warmed; I felt I did trust Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation; and an assurance was given to me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and had saved me from the law of sin and death"? For, O brethren, while we need intellectual enlargement and social stimulus and many other blessings, we need most of all the direct touch of God upon us, the vision of his uplifted face, and the sound of his sweet forgiving voice. If this experience should ever become wanting or scarce among us, then we should have no further justification for our existence as an organized body of Christians.

Our sole stock in trade is our religion. When that goes, we shall be the most poverty-stricken people on the face of the earth; for we shall have nothing left to fall back upon—no long-stretching centuries of history, no ivy-clad cathedrals, no monumental volumes of theology, no elaborate ritual of worship.

God himself, consciously known, worshiped, adored, and loved through Jesus Christ, is our only and our everlasting portion.

If after the Conference is over you should wish to travel, the continent is open before you, free, thank God, every foot of it. Nor is there a region on all its ample face, from the outermost rim of settlement in the Far North to the remotest villages along the Southern coast, and from the Atlantic shores to the Pacific, where you will not find a company of the spiritual children of John Wesley ready to give you a warm and generous reception. Individually, we may not be as good as we ought to be—I have a grave fear that we are not—but there are lots of us and more a-coming.

As a matter of course, you will feel at home—those of you who are English, at any rate—in Canada, this beautiful land of the snows and the aurora borealis, for here there is blent and fused with the sturdiest Americanism an undying love for the crown and kingdom of old England. And of course you will feel at home in the United States also; for it has been a full hundred years, lacking only three, since Andrew Jackson and his Tennessee volunteers went to New Orleans and put an emphatic period to our last unbrotherly war. God grant that in all the ages to come there may never be another muster of opposing armies between these two branches of our mighty English-speaking race! Amen and amen!

We are your brothers. Our fathers marched together with yours out of the forests of Northern Germany and threw aside their heathen gods to accept the white Christ. There is nothing great in your history

that does not equally belong to us. Your ancient hereditaments of language, literature, liberty, law, and faith we share in common with you. In the course of three hundred years we have picked up some new things on our own account. Look around you; and if you see anything that you want, take it and welcome. Between us—and not to be told in Gath nor published in the streets of Askelon—we have some things that I wish you would take and keep or, better still, drop into the sea as you go home.

You need have no fear that we shall seek to annex you. All that we desire is to enmesh you in that mystic web of Christian love which stretches, stronger than steel cables, through all lands and all centuries and holds together in a glorious unity the hearts of those who can truly say that Jesus is Lord.

Once more, and with added emphasis, welcome, welcome, welcome.

VII.

SOME CONDITIONS OF ORGANIC UNION.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Rom. xii. 4.)

SOME CONDITIONS OF ORGANIC UNION.

[Remarks following Bishop Cranston's paper before the session of the Methodist Joint Commission on Federation and Union, Baltimore, Md., November, 1911.]

Mr. President: I am very sorry that the Commissioners from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are not in position at the present time to make a written statement of their views in regard to the matters that are brought up for consideration in the paper just read by Bishop Cranston for the Commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But neither Bishop Wilson nor Bishop Denny could be with us at our meeting last night, and we were unwilling to take formal and definite action without their presence and help. Nevertheless, speaking for myself and representing what I believe to be the spirit of my Church, I am prepared to utter my mind with all freedom and, as I hope, without any trace of unchristian prejudice. It is my rooted conviction that the very first step toward securing a brotherly adjustment among the different bodies of American Methodists is to be found in a frank and full exhibition of the real difficulties that lie in the way of such a result. It ought to be possible for us to open our minds to one another. If we are too sensitive to listen to plain speech, then we are in no mood for fraternal negotiations; and the sooner we adjourn and go home, the better it will be. Were it possible for me to practice any evasion or reserve on so important an occasion as this is, then I should count

myself utterly unworthy of the great honor that my Church has bestowed upon me in sending me hither.

Let me say, then, with all the courtesy that I can command, and yet with the utmost possible explicitness, that we are not in the least embarrassed or confused by your proposition for union. There was never a time in our history when we were unwilling to give due and proper consideration to any advances from our sister Churches. In the very beginning of our separate history, and without waiting for the settlement of all outstanding differences, we sought honorable fraternity. Our offer, rejected in 1848, was never withdrawn, but remained open till 1874, when, to our very great joy, it was frankly accepted on the very terms that were originally attached to it.

Twenty years later, thinking that the time had fully come for a still closer *rapprochement,* we originated the scheme for federation, out of which much has already come, and to which we confidently look for still greater things. It will be a deep satisfaction to me till my dying day that in the providence of God I was a member of the special committee of the General Conference of 1894 which was appointed to deal with the whole matter, and that I wrote every word of the report which was adopted without the slightest modification by that body, and then passed on to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

There is still another fact of history not so well known that also ought to be mentioned here. The convention of 1845, which completed the organization of our branch of the Church, passed a resolution to the effect—I regret not having the exact words at

my command—that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, would always be ready under proper conditions to treat with the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of reunion. It was not in the minds of the great men who composed that assembly to shut themselves up blindly against the developments of the future. They did not know what the future might bring forth, and they solemnly put themselves on record as being prepared to meet any fresh emergency in a rational and Christian way.

In line with their promise, and by the express direction of our General Conference that met in Asheville, N. C., during May of the current year, we are here present before God to hear and to weigh whatever offer you may have to make. It is, indeed, a source of gratification to us to confer with men who manifest so much of the mind of Christ as you have done since we came together.

While I am on this point, and to keep the history straight, I may as well add that the assertion so often printed and lately repeated by one of the leading journals and also by one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that in the past we have time and again declined overtures for union, is absolutely without foundation in fact. No such overture has ever at any time been presented to us by anybody that had the slightest authority to do it. I am not at all unmindful that in the run of the years several fraternal messengers have rather gratuitously advised us to "come back to our mother"; but that is quite another story, and nowise contradicts the truth of what I have just said. Even now, my beloved brethren, it is not a direct but

only a constructive invitation that reaches us. Yet not wishing to give any occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, we have responded to it without hesitation.

My own heart is most profoundly concerned for the real unity of American Methodism. Confronted as we are by a thousand open or secret foes of the faith, it is a thing of supreme concern that we should array ourselves in solid columns and with unbroken front. If we are Christians, we must come to a perfect understanding and a harmonious coöperation. Less than this is less than our Lord has a right to expect of us. Individually, I do not shy even at "organic union." The phrase, like most other forms of speech, is an elastic one, and may mean one thing or may mean another. Of course I shall claim the right to put my own interpretation on it. What that interpretation is will come out later. You need have no fear that I shall palter with words in a double sense.

But if there is to be any closer union than now obtains, several things are necessary.

1. All the existing compacts, including those that were framed by the Cape May Commission and those that have since been framed by the Joint Commission on Federation must first be honored, not in the breach, but in the observance of them. It is not worth while to enter into any new covenants till we are ready both in the letter and in the spirit to observe the old ones. The Church that is faithless in one engagement will, if interest or convenience require it, be faithless to another, and does not deserve to be trusted. If it be said in answer to this dictum that General Conferences cannot always control the actions of their agents or enforce

the terms of their own voluntary contracts, then it only remains to further affirm that General Conferences which are so impotent are practicing a fraud when they make such compacts. This language is perfectly general in its scope, and hits only those, but all those, who are in the way of it. Here I stand stubbornly, and from this position I will not budge an inch.

2. Negotiations must not proceed upon the supposition, express or implied, that denominationalism as such is schismatic or sinful. Schism, in the New Testament meaning of the word, is not separation from a Church, but a chronic and malignant quarrel inside of it. Some Protestants, including a few Methodists, have actually stolen the argument of the Romanists and the High Church Episcopalians concerning union, and are using it as if it were a new discovery. Do they not see that they are thereby canceling their own right to an ecclesiastical existence? If their contention be true, then it follows that Luther, Calvin, Knox, and Cranmer were all wrong and their Roman antagonists all right. Nay, the most of the pleas that are used to bolster up the plan for what is called "the reunion of Christendom" would, if logically followed out, land us inevitably in the conclusion that Protestantism should abjure its past record and make a speedy peace with Rome. But there is nothing in the New Testament to justify any such view. Not one of the classical passages that are quoted to sustain it has any such force. Our Lord, for example, never said that his sheep should all become of one fold. It was worth the revision of the New Testament to get that false translation out of John x. 16. What the Lord did say was this: "Other

sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be [not one fold, but] one flock and one shepherd." The unity of the flock depends not on the unity of the fold, but on the unity of the shepherd. It would be an impossible thing to make one fold large enough to hold all of Christ's sheep. Equally fallacious is the use that is sought to be made of our Lord's high priestly prayer in John xvii. and of the great paragraph on "the seven unities" in Ephesians iv. But I have not time to notice them now. The conception of a world-wide Church, under one authoritative head, whether that head be a pope, a council, a general assembly, or a general conference, is at war with the whole genius of Protestantism. That conception was not in the Primitive Church any more than it is in the New Testament. I do not believe that during the first century anybody ever dreamed of it. It came later, along with a flood of other errors and heresies. Human nature being what it is, such a Church as this would inevitably grow proud of its own bulk and obesity, and in the course of time would become, first arrogant, then persecuting, and finally rotten and corrupt. Denominationalism within due limits, which men are to determine for themselves and nobody else is to determine for them, is one of the greatest safeguards of Christian purity. Not even as an ideal to be realized in the remote future do I look or pray for the abolition of it. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; and where there is liberty, there is sure to be diversity.

3. We shall make no real progress toward the goal in view as long as we insist that the past separations

among the Methodists have been wicked or evil. As I look at it, the providence of God has been in them all. The separation of the Methodist Protestants in 1824-28 was accompanied, it is true, by a great deal of unchristian acerbity on both sides. That, of course, was wrong. But good came out of it. We are all indebted, largely indebted, to our Protestant brethren; and we have all paid them the homage of imitation. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1866 followed their example by giving laymen an equal representation in the General Conference and effective representation in the Annual Conferences, and the Methodist Episcopal Church moved later on the same tracks. Still more earnestly do I hold to the opinion that the separation of 1844—"which was by consent and mutual"—was an epochal incident in the history of American Methodism and a real contribution to the growth of the kingdom of God in these United States. The General Conference which met in that year was not, as is commonly believed, made up of angry disputants. Having read the records again and again and with the greatest care, I declare that, in my judgment, a more serious, conscientious, and devout company of men never met together on this continent. They moved slowly and acted reluctantly with heartaches and hot tears on their cheeks. The anger, the irritations, the unchristian conflicts came later and might have been avoided. But the separation was designed to promote peace and brotherhood. Not even Charles Elliot, the author of "The Great Secession," was ever able to answer his own able speech in favor of it. It simply could not be avoided. Conditions had arisen which

would have wrecked the Methodism of the North if it had remained in alliance with the South, and, as Stephen Olin pointed out in burning words, would have wrecked the Methodism of the South if it had remained in alliance with the North. As things turned out, the two Churches were set in right alignments with their own sections. God was surely in it, in spite of the human follies that accompanied it.

4. I go a step farther still and make bold to say that any attempt at the present time to bring about a union by pressure would be foolish and futile. The advocates of union must understand that they have no legitimate instrument but persuasion, and that even this they must use in a spirit of love. Let those who fear God and are controlled, not by a lust for ecclesiastical empire, but by zeal for the extension of his kingdom, beware how they try to create division in the ranks of any Church that is not willing to merge itself in a larger organization. Any such move would provoke hot and righteous indignation, and would work an indefinite postponement of the day of a complete unification. The sad experience of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church ought surely to teach us a lesson here. The result of a premature effort to force an unwilling element in that communion—whether a majority or simply a large minority—into an alliance that it did not relish has ended in a long series of scandals. The same thing on a much more exaggerated scale would occur if a similar attempt were made to rush the consolidation of our Methodisms. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, when it moves, and whichever way it moves, will move of its own unforced accord, and not in broken detach-

ments, but in a solid body, 2,000,000 strong. The suggestion that it may become necessary to reach the laymen by going over the heads of the ministers is, if serious, sinister; and if not serious, silly. Our ministers and laymen have marched together too long to split up into opposing camps now. That will come to pass on the day after the Greek calends.

5. If a real, vital, and permanent union is to be effected, each separate Church must be ready to make some concessions, and this too not on trifling points but on matters of real importance. There must be no blinking this fact and no policy of shiftiness or maneuvering for advantage. Those who are most eager for union ought to be the first to say how far they are willing to go to obtain it. The mere intimation that either one of the Churches should absorb the other, retaining meanwhile all its own prized peculiarities, would be an impertinence. If organic union ever becomes a reality, it will consist not in the mere enlargement of any existing Church, but in the creation of a new Church. The Southern Methodists do not wish to absorb anybody, and they are not going to be absorbed. Many of us, at any rate, before submitting to that will camp out under God's kindly stars.

6. As a matter of course, the largest Church going into the new organization would have the greatest weight and influence. That would be natural and proper. But it would also be natural and proper for the minority bodies, simply because they are minorities, to insist in advance on the safeguarding of their reserved rights by stipulations of organic law. Majorities can take care of themselves; it is minorities

that must have protection. Nor would it be sufficient simply to formulate a constitution. The question as to who shall interpret the constitution is one of equal importance. From our standpoint, an omnipotent General Conference that may sit one day as a legislature to enact laws and the next day as a supreme court to pass upon their constitutionality is simply a despotism tempered by religion. The fact that it is made up of good men does not alter the situation. Good men are sometimes rash and foolish. The liberties of a Church, as truly as those of a nation, are too valuable to be trusted to the precarious guardianship of any unrestricted synod or conference. Somewhere on the outside there must be lodged a power of arrest. Whether it should lie in a suspensive veto by the executive with ultimate appeal to the whole body of the ministry and chosen representatives of the laity, or should take on some other form, is an open question. But that it must exist in some form is not an open question. On this ground somebody will be compelled to do a considerable amount of yielding. Either one Church or the other must modify its theory and practice.

7. Let me conclude by adding that the vast alteration which the Methodist Episcopal Church has made in the original conditions of membership are a stumblingblock to some of us. As we read the Discipline of that Church, it requires belief in the Twenty-Five Articles of Religion from all candidates. This is a departure from original Methodism. The Twenty-Five Articles are very good. I do not want to alter them, lest we should get something not so good. But I am

opposed to thrusting them down the throats of immature believers, or of mature ones either for that matter. John Wesley never would have dreamed of doing it. Following the noble catholicity of the English reformers, he cut all the creeds out of the ordination ritual for ministers—*all of them.* It is inconceivable that he should have exacted any of them from laymen. Equally objectionable to some of us is the demand that is made of candidates that they should profess saving faith. Not that we would belittle saving faith, not at all; nor that we would cease to urge the pursuit of it on all our people; but that we would not insist on the conscious attainment of it as a *sine qua non* of Church membership. Of old the Methodists took in seekers after religion and gave them the ordinances. The new Methodism that declines to do so seems to us to partake more of the nature of a Puritan conventicle than of a catholic Church. Nor can it be successfully maintained that its membership, on the average, is either any more orthodox in its belief or any more devout in its piety than that of the Methodisms that still cling to the usage of the fathers and founders.

8. That some of you will be found demanding surrender from our Church in some important respects, I do not doubt. Be it so. Speak out your minds, brethren. It will not offend us in the least. We desire you, in fact, to tell us what in your judgment we ought to give up. We shall listen to you respectfully, and either comply with your wishes or else seek to show you why we cannot conscientiously do so.

THE BATTLE OF THE LORD.

HARK! the trumpet blast is ringing
  Till it fills both earth and sky,
And the sons of God are gathering
  For the battle that is nigh.

With their banners to the breezes,
  And their armor gleaming bright,
They are marching, they are coming;
  They are eager for the fight.

Who shall stay their onward movement?
  Or shall bid them sound retreat?
They have set their hearts on victory;
  They shall never know defeat.

Rides the Lord himself before them,
  Girt with sword upon his thigh;
At the shining of his kingly face
  All his craven foes shall fly.

Hail we then the glorious Leader,
  Cheer we all the gallant host;
With uplifted hearts and voices
  Let us make triumphant boast.

For the day of days is coming,
  And the kingdom is at hand;
And the glory that the prophets spoke
  Breaks in billows o'er the land.

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